Florida WILDLIFE

SPECIAL SPRING FISHING ISSUE

FISHING FLORIDA'S FRESH WATERS

BASIC ANGLING

APRIL, 1958

The Florida Magazine for all Sportsmen

25 CENTS

FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S

Fishing Citation

"for that BIG ONE that DIDN'T get away"

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All fish must be taken from the fresh waters of the state of Florida, as defined by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Fish must be caught on conventional fly, spinning, or bait-casting tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness.

The catch must be weighed and recorded at a fishing camp or tackle store within the state by the owner, manager, or an authorized agent of the respective establishment.

Application for a Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation must be made within 10 days of the date fish was caught. Application must be made on the prescribed form as shown on this page. (Requests for additional forms should be addressed to: Florida Wildlife, Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.)

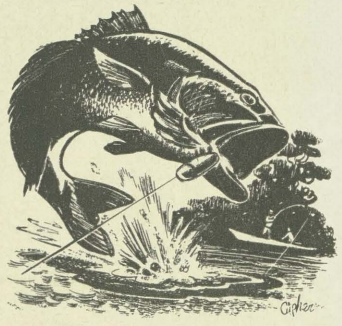
Citation, showing recorded data of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

The receipt of any and all photographs pertaining to the registered catch, including the applicant and the fish, will be appreciated by the editor for use in Florida Wildlife Magazine.

Florida Wildlife Fishing Citations are available without charge, to any and all subscribers to Florida Wildlife Magazine, and their immediate families, who catch any of the following fresh-water game fish of the prescribed size requirements:

SPECIES

LARGEMOUTH BASS ..... 8 pounds or larger	SHELLCRACKER ..... 2 pounds or larger
CHAIN PICKEREL ..... 4 pounds or larger	BLACK CRAPPIE ..... 2 pounds or larger
BLUEGILL (BREAM) ..... 1 ½ pounds or larger	RED BREAST ..... 1 pound or larger



CUT OUT AND SAVE THIS APPLICATION BLANK

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE Date_____
Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

Please send me the Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation with the inscribed data listed below:

Name_____ Address_____

Species of Fish_____ Weight_____ Length_____

Type of Tackle, Bait Used_____

Where Caught_____ Date_____

Catch Witnessed by_____

Registered, Weighed by_____ at_____

_____
(Signature of Applicant)

VOLUME 11, NO. 11

Florida WILDLIFE

APRIL, 1958

★

Published monthly by the
FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
Tallahassee, Florida

★

**Dedicated to the
Conservation, Restoration, Protection of Our Game and Fish**

★

BILL HANSEN, Editor **MORRIE NAGGIAR, Associate Editor**

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In This Issue

Slow Jig Time For Specks	Charles Waterman	9
Fishing Florida's Fresh Waters	Morrie Naggiar	12
Be Sure To Get The Point	Edmund McLaurin	18
Slow and Deliberate	Russell Tinsley	22
Basic Angling	Chuck Schilling	24
Forestry And Fishing	John Danahy, Jr.	28
Bass Fishing From A to Z	Ernie Lyons	30
Around The State		33
The Winged Menace	Darel McConkey	34
Wildlife, Source of Much Weather Lore	Jay Casey	36
Ghost of the Gravel Pits	George X. Sand	38

Departments

Strikes & Backlashes	4	**Junior Conservationist**	8
Florida Club News	5	**Florida Birdlife**	42
Fishing	6	**Muzzle Flashes**	44
		Test & Tells	48

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Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission

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KEEP IN LINE

Gentlemen:

As a regular subscriber of the FLORIDA WILDLIFE Magazine I think you are doing a wonderful job. It is very interesting and educational for the sportsman.

Attached is a clipping from my "home state" of West Virginia. I think it would be interesting to reprint this to show what can be done and has to be done to keep some people in line even when it comes to hunting.

B. E. Cook
Winter Park, Fla.

Hunting Rights Gone

One Raleigh County man will put away his hunting equipment for the next five years as the result of a penalty imposed by the state Conservation Commission.

The Raleigh County Clerk's office this week received an order from the Commission stating that the hunting license of Jackie Payne of Sprague has been revoked for the next five years.

The suspension was the result of a charge of negligent shooting occurring in Monroe County on December 14, 1957.

Payne was ordered to turn in his license to the clerk. The clerk can not sell him another for five years.

EVEN MOSQUITOS OKAY

Dear Sirs:

I am enclosing a check for a one year subscription to FLORIDA WILDLIFE.

One certainly doesn't appreciate Florida's lush, wild beauty fully until he leaves it behind for a few months and goes to colder more barren country. I'm thanking the Lord I'll soon be returning home to cabbage palms, live oaks, cypress, Spanish moss, saw palmetto, long leaf pines, gators, diamondbacks, and even water hyacinths and mosquitos.

Pvt. R. P. Elliot
Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.

SAMBAR DEER

Dear Editor:

I tried to tell a friend of mine about the large deer on St. Vincent Island off Franklin County, Florida. It has been quite a long time since I read the article about these deer but I seem to remember that they were brought over from Europe, released on this island and grew to a rather large size. Please furnish me with some information so that I can get back in good standing with my friend.

Carl E. Windhone
Pensacola, Fla.

● *Privately-owned St. Vincent's Island does boast a population of exotic deer, the Sambar of southern Asia. Sometime around 1908, Dr. R. V. Pierce bought the 14,000 acre island to use as a private hunting retreat. He secured a few Sambars through the New York Zoological Society and released them on the island. They readily adapted themselves to conditions on St. Vincent's which has supported a more or less thriving population since those earlier days. Adult Sambars reportedly weigh between 600 and 700 pounds, vaguely resemble the elk or wapiti of the western states.*

BLUE BATTLER

Dear Sir:

Enjoy reading FLORIDA WILDLIFE especially your recent article "Blue Battler" — I do a great deal of fly fishing throughout the year, mostly for blue gills. Locally we have a sports club known as the "Big Blues" which annually presents the "Big Blues Trophy" to the member having caught the largest Blue Gill for the year. Each year the member catching the largest blue gill has his name engraved on the trophy. After ten years the member who has his name on the trophy more than any other keeps the trophy. It's unbelievable how the members travel to some remote lakes hoping to tie into some trophy winning blue gills. My wife took the trophy last year with a pound, four ouncer. The year before it was taken with a pound, nine ounce. So far this year the same fellow with the one pound, niner is leading with a pound, four. I notice in your fishing citation that you must enter a pound and one half or larger to receive a citation. Judging from this you should know where good blue gill fishing can be had in your state. Every year for at least fifteen years we spend five to six weeks fishing the local lakes and the St. Johns River from Big George to Lake Jessup. We have been catching our share of very large bass especially on top water poppers plus trolling live shiners for those lunkers your state is so famous for. I've shown movies of your bass fishing to thousands of other equally enthusiastic fishermen in Chicago. We usually come down in March. Though this year we are leaving Feb. 24th. After chopping holes thru eighteen inches of ice to get some fishin' it will be a pleasure to whip a fly over open water soon.

Louis Gardner
Chicago, Illinois

THIS MONTH'S COVER

by Wallace Hughes

Spinning tackle, fly rod, bait casting outfit, cane pole, or jigger rig—no matter what the connecting link—a hook stung largemouth is capable of advancing some vitamin packed arguments against coming aboard. Widely acclaimed as Florida's Freshwater Champion, the largemouth occurs in a variety of waters throughout the state.

Five representatives of the largemouth group occur in the state. They are the Northern Largemouth, the Florida Largemouth, the Suwannee River Largemouth, the Spotted Bass, and the Redeye or Coosa Bass. Whatever you call 'em, Florida's bass are ready to argue most anytime.

FLORIDA FISHING

Gentlemen:

I just received my first copy of FLORIDA WILDLIFE, the February, 1958 issue. A very excellent and informative publication, I found my first issue most enjoyable. I am an enthusiastic fisherman and intend to spend the months of March and April investigating the famed Florida bass fishing. I also like to fish for the chain pickerel, a very popular New England species.

I plan to fish from the Apalachicola to the Everglades with special emphasis on the headwaters of the St. Johns.

Richard Samms
Provincetown, Mass.

WILDLIFE FIRST

Dear Editor:

In our home we have many different books and magazines but none can take the place of FLORIDA WILDLIFE. My husband and I read and enjoy everything published in it. Please present some good fishing stories and tell us how to catch fish.

W. H. Gore
Panama City, Fla.

FLORIDA CLUB NEWS

Federation Notes

By CHARLES WATERMAN

FLORIDA WOULD BE the only state to have no funds earmarked for game and fish if proposed constitutional revision is carried out, according to a letter from Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Wildlife Management Institute, Washington. The letter was read by Dr. H. R. Wilber, Federation president, at a Wildlife Federation staff meeting held in Tallahassee in February.

The awards program was discussed and the staff heard minutes of the meeting of the Florida Conservation Fund trustees. Bob Aldrich, director of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, commented on the awards program and recommended the addition of a career award.

Discussion of the recently formed Conservation Council brought out the fact that it is to be a discussion panel and act as a sounding board for state-wide organizations with conservation interests.

Walter Mims, regional director of the National Wildlife Federation, complimented the Florida Federation on the past year's work and made special mention of the awards program.

As chairman of Wildlife Week, Tommy Anderson stressed the importance of using that period as a time for issuing as much conservation publicity as possible. The 1958 theme was "Protect Our Public Lands."

Representing south Florida, Sam DuBon pointed out that his area might support skin divers but was in opposition to any kind of spear fishing.

Dr. Wilber announced he would attend the National Wildlife Federation meeting and the North American Wildlife Conference in St. Louis early in March.

Wildlife Federation Officers have been busy with the awards program for the current year. Following the successful awards banquet held in Tallahassee in February, the system was reviewed and changes considered. The following is a brief outline of awards matters as they stand at present.

The committee decided to rewrite the awards brochure to simplify it and make some basic changes. The number of club awards will be cut to three: Outstanding conservationist of the community in any category; public school teacher with the most achievement in conservation; adult guidance of junior conservationists.

At present, it is intended to keep all regional awards as they were during 1957 with the addition of an award for the outstanding junior conservationist. The ruling that career personnel are not eligible is to be removed.

The conservation fund committee has requested any club having contacts, industrial or otherwise, who might be interested in contributing to the educational fund, to contact the Federation as soon as possible.

According to present plans, the scholarships to be given to worthy students interested in conservation information and education will be made for the junior and senior years. Conferences with university faculty members indicated that the first two

(Continued on Page 43)

Photo by Bill Hansen

George X. Sand (left), prominent outdoor writer of Deerfield Beach, Fla., receives congratulations from Governor LeRoy Collins at recent Sportsmen's Conservation Awards Program banquet in Tallahassee. Sands received the Governor's Award as Florida Conservationist of the Year. A report on other awards winners was carried in the March issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE. The program was sponsored by the Sears Roebuck Foundation and conducted with the cooperation of the Florida Wildlife Federation.

CLUB DIRECTORY

The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission plans to release soon a 1958-59 Conservation and Sportsman's Club Directory. Copy deadline for this publication has been set for March 31, 1958. All such organizations are urged to supply the following information for the Directory:

1. **Name of the club and its official mailing address.**
2. **Roster of officers, their mailing address and telephone numbers.**
3. **Roster of directors and their mailing addresses.**
4. **Club bulletin, name, style and publication dates.**
5. **Regional, state and national organizations of which the club is affiliated.**

The information should be mailed not later than March 31, 1958 to Mr. Fred Sturges, State Coordinator, P.O. Box 664, Stuart, Florida.

By CHUCK SCHILLING

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE any sports fisherman in all the world who doesn't know about Florida's spectacular, fresh water fishing. Our Florida fresh water game fish are so big, they have to be considered separately in national contests to prevent the Sunshine State entries from copping all the top prizes.

Equally well-known is the wonderful salt water fishing Florida's Coastal waters produce. Salt water game fish prowl the Gulf and Gulf Stream in uncounted millions to delight the heart of any angler. What is not so well-known about Florida's fabulous fishing is that, in much of the state's fresh water, salt water game fish compete with the sweet water residents for the sportsman's attention.

To me, this mixed up fishing holds special fascination. In the wonderful way of fishes, many salt water game fish take to fresh water like a blue bream taking a fly. Snook (that grand game fish), tarpon, channel bass, sea trout, jack crevalle, and ladyfish, can be found in much of Florida's fresh water. In fact, Lake Okeechobee has plenty of snook, tarpon and mullet the year round.

The salt water bottom feeders, also, take to fresh water. Sheepshead, drum, croaker, and moonfish rub fins with gafftopsail catfish and mangrove snapper. Sharks, manatees, and porpoise, also, seek out fresh water and, usually, can be found in the general mix-up. I have caught pompano, bluefish, and numerous other salt water varieties many miles from salt water.

There is hardly a river in the Sunshine State that does not present such a hodgepodge fishing picture for at least part of its length. Many of Florida's lakes are connected by water to our river systems, and these, too, are open to salt water invasion. Even Silver Springs at Ocala, surely about as remote from salt water as any place in Florida, has salt water fish swimming alongside the fresh water varieties in its crystal clear depths.

Many parts of the country offer excellent salt or fresh water fishing, but where can you find both in the same water and in such endless variety as in Florida? There is something about a fresh water river, creek, or lake that just naturally appeals to me. The abundance of wildlife, the profusion of aquatic vegetation, the wildflowers and shore growth make a fitting setting in which to pursue one of man's oldest and most respected sports. The noble bass, the scrappy bream, the ominous gar or mudfish would be quite enough to quicken the pulse of any angler. Adding the many varieties of terrific salt water game fish to this potpourri makes it a dish fit for a king. This, to my way of thinking, is Florida's fishing at its finest.

Sheepshead are one of the many salt water fish that inhabit the bottoms of Florida's fresh water rivers. Trick is to strike just before they bite.

One of the first times I can remember getting a thrill from this Florida specialty was many years ago on the beautiful Loxahatchee River. This stream enters the ocean at Jupiter Inlet about 20 miles north of Palm Beach. It's a jungle stream, winding back thru the scrub and swamp for 25 or 30 miles. In those days, it was a lonely river, with "Trapper Nelson's" wild animal camp far up in the swamp the only sign of civilization. Come to think of it, it wasn't much of a sign at that.

We were fishing about 10 miles up the river from the inlet, catching big black bass on spoons. It was typical bass country, the river turning lazily and the fish lying in the deep holes in the shade under the cut banks and on the points. We were loafing along, casting halfheartedly, when I got a strike that nearly scared me out of my wits and left me bug eyed. A great silver fish took my spoon and made three magnificent leaps that took him clear of the water each time to fall back with a huge splash and much thrashing. All this took place before my mouth closed and so near the boat, I could have touched the fish with the end of my rod — if I could have moved, that is. With a final, contemptuous leap, the fish was gone.

That afternoon, we jumped 8 or 10 more tarpon and finally landed one that weighed about 25 pounds.

It was one of the high spots of my angling life 'til then, and I have never gotten over it. Since that time, I've taken many tarpon on light tackle in fresh water. I've had 6-ft. sharkes take 6-inch bluegills. I've had my canoe upset and seven of its ribs broken by sea cows. I've had 30-lb. snook take tiny popping bugs when I was fishing for bream back in the lily pads, and I once caught a loggerhead turtle while trolling for trout.

Most people never think of sea trout except as a strictly salt water fish. Nothing could be farther from the truth. One of the biggest trout I ever caught was taken 15 miles from the ocean in completely fresh water, where a fresh water fishing license was mandatory. This trout hit a homemade, top water plug I had whittled from about 8 inches of mop handle. The plug was a horror, but the trout weighed 12-lb., 9-oz., and was very close to the World Record at that time. This trout looked more like a pickerel. He was thin as a rail. If he had been of average weight for his length, he'd have weighed at least 15 pounds.

One of the little recognized factors about Florida's mixed up fishing is that salt and fresh water have a reluctance to mix. In addition, the two waters are often at very different temperatures. This results, many times, in a river that has 4 or 5 feet of completely fresh water on top of 5 or 6 or even more feet of salt water. I've seen the St. Lucie River when the bottom 3 feet was very salty and alive with feeding fish, while the top portion of the river was all fresh and devoid of action. Sometimes just the reverse is true. In mixed up fishing, more than the fish are jumbled, and it pays to fish both the top, the bottom, and the places between.

Are salt water fish the only travelers? Well, almost, but not quite. Fresh water fish sometimes venture into brackish water, and I have on rare occasions caught black bass in really salty water, but this is unusual. Alligators, normally fresh water creatures, will sometimes go to brackish or salt water. Many people believe they do this when injured or suffering from disease.

Here's a snook that took a bass plug in the fabulous, mixed up, Florida fishing. This is an experience that can unnerve a strong man.

One of the most delightful things about mixed up fishing is the fun you can have anchored in a cozy spot, fishing for bottom fish with shrimp or cut bait. This is especially exciting for the children. In my home neighborhood, any day when the weather nixes regular fishing, the mixed up bottom of the upper rivers gets a big play. Sheepshead, croaker, drum, mixed with bass, bream, and an occasional channel catfish weighing up to 15 pounds, makes for a fine way to spend a cold or windy day.

One of my most treasured spots is on the north fork of the St. Lucie River about 5 miles above Burt Pruitt's Fish Farm. Here the river is slow and deep, and on a wide bend, a live oak tree leans out over the water from the west bank. In the deep shade under the old tree's limbs, I like to eat my lunch, looking out over the bright expanse of the river toward the tall pines that march down the opposite shore.

From my cool retreat, I can lift my eyes above the pines to admire the ever changing majesty of cumulus clouds riding serenely out over the Gulf Stream. A tarpon rolls nearby, and the quiet of the river is broken only by the lazy plop of a leaping mullet. I often stretch out for a little nap after lunch. Looking up thru the live oak's arms, I can see wild orchids and air plants blooming just overhead. To drift off to sleep under such circumstances will catch no fish but is a very rewarding part of my fishing.

Eating Trouble

In the past few years, I have made many a fishing trip to famous fishing areas, from New Brunswick to the Keys, from the Bahamas to Nova Scotia and places between. Most of the time, I've stayed at the fishing resorts or clubs serving the angler in these places. Most of these have one thing in common, which is a disregard for the angler's necessity in eating arrangements.

With few exceptions, fishing resorts insist on applying the same yardstick to angler's eating habits as they would to the nonfishing tourist. Breakfast hours are, usually, from 7:30 until 9, lunch from 11 to 1, dinner from 6 'til 8. The angler guest who wants to take advantage of early morning and late evening fishing will either have to find a restaurant that does stay open, cook

(Continued on Page 50)

JUNIOR CONSERVATIONIST

By DENVER STE. CLAIRE

IF YOU HAVE EVER ATTENDED our camp, you have probably, by this time, received by mail an application card for our 1958 summer camp. If you have not received an application, and wish to attend the camp, you should write now and request an application-reservation card from our office at 205 West Adams Street, Ocala, Florida.

Our quota for each weekly camping session has been set at not more than 125 campers. We are sending the application cards out early this year so that you can make sure of your camping reservation.

Don't forget that there is a two-week session for campers this year, for the first time in the history of our camp. The two-week camp is an experiment. If successful, we will have other two-week camps.

Please notice that the camping fee is slightly higher for the two-week camp session of 13 days without interruption. This is simply because it costs more to feed you for 13 days than for five days.

The experimental two-week camp starts July 6 and ends July 19, with a full daily program scheduled. Boys between the ages of 8 and 12 may attend this two-week camp.

No matter which week you are attending, we suggest that, as soon as you receive your application card, you should make sure that your parents fill in all of the right spaces on both sides of the card and rush it along to us at 205 West Adams Street, Ocala.

We have "invented" a new application blank for use at our camp this year. We designed it to save trouble for you, your parents and our camp personnel.

We feel that the new application card should be explained to you:

Our new application-reservation form is all on one card, printed on both sides. You, and your parents, fill in all of the right blank spaces on both sides of the card, and return the complete card to our Ocala office.

If you make sure that the card is filled in right, you will not have to stand in the long registration lines that we used to have at camp.

One section of the card is your registration blank. Either print or type the right information on the card.

On the other side of this part of the card is the Doctor's certificate that you are in good health for life at camp. This part of the card must be filled in either by your family doctor, if you have one, or with the help of your County Health Department. If your Health Department does not give such examinations, they will be able to tell you who to contact.

Another part of the card explains the number of camping weeks, the dates, and whether the week is for girls or boys. It also gives the ages of the campers for each week. On the other side of this section is listed the camping fees for members and non-members of our League.

On another section of the card are the blanks that you should not fill in. When you return the complete card to us at camp, we will fill in the blanks and return it as a receipt for your money. The receipt will also show the week that you will attend camp. On the other side of your receipt is an explanation, for your parents, of the camp, and the address and phone number. Be sure that your parents keep this section of the card, when it is returned to you, so that they will have the camp address and be able to write you letters while you are at camp.

You will see that the application card is really three cards, separated by perforations. Don't separate the sections. Send the complete card, all three sections, to our Ocala office, where they will be separated and the proper receipt card returned to you. One of the other two sections will be kept on file at our Ocala office, while the third one will be on file at the camp.

Our staff feels very proud of this new type of application and looks forward to the results it will bring.

Applications will be mailed to all those who filed an application with us last year. Our mailing list is made from all campers attending the Sixth Annual Encampment. If any of you young boys and girls are reading this for the first time, and have not attended camp before, please write, or have your mothers or fathers write, in for an application. *Don't wait.* See that it is done NOW!

Governor's Banquet

It was our privilege to attend the Governor's Banquet presented by the Sears Foundation and the Florida Wildlife Federation February 8, 1958, at the Duval Hotel in Tallahassee. There were over a hundred in attendance. Governor LeRoy Collins was our principal guest and speaker. Dr H. R. Wilber, President of the Wildlife Federation, was Master of Ceremonies. Some of our top leaders in Conservation were present at the Banquet. There were many names, far too many to list here.

I do want to tell you, though, of the Governor's Award for the Top Conservationist. Mr. George X. Sand of Deerfield Beach received this honor. Mr. Sand is an Outdoor and Resource writer, probably one of the best outdoor writers in the country.

There were other awards, both state and regional.

On the regional level, the Adult Guidance for Jr. Conservation Clubs awards were given to the following leaders:

(Continued on Page 49)

Slow Jig Time For Specks

On the short end as far as fight and brains go, the "speck" still ranks high with Florida's light tackle wielders

By CHARLES WATERMAN

A SPECKLED PERCH is not likely to strip the gears of your favorite reel, he will not shower water over your cowering frame in mighty leaps for freedom and few fishermen have stuffed crappie hanging over their mantelpieces.

When they handed out the brains for fishes the speckled perch was probably off somewhere looking for something to eat. Down through the years, he has been hurled into various pastures all over the United States, often on the business end of tackle more suited for marlin, and he has been yanked up from great depths with such dispatch that he barely wiggled when he reached the surface. Called "croppie", "crappy", "papermouth", "speckled perch" and a lot of other things, he has saved many a fishing trip that would otherwise have been doomed to failure.

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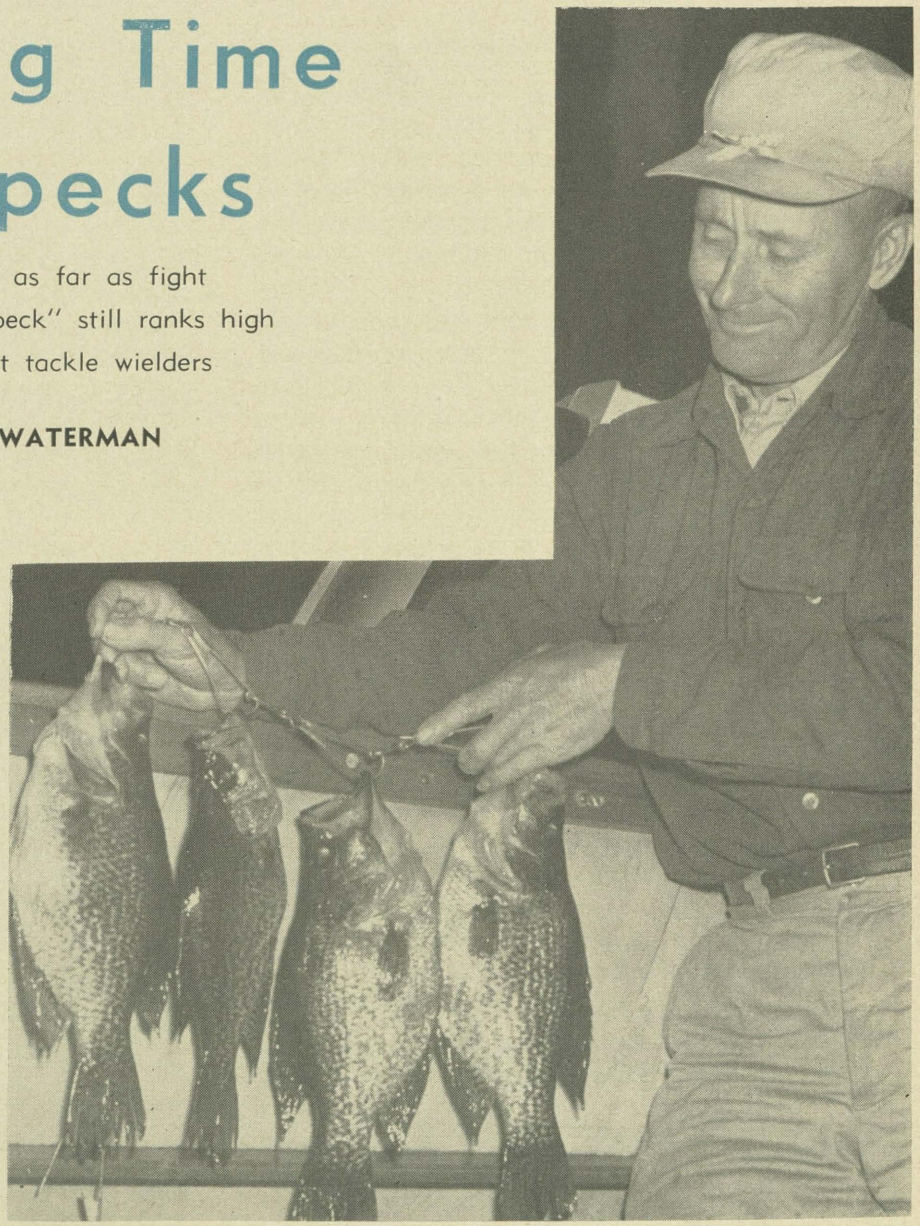
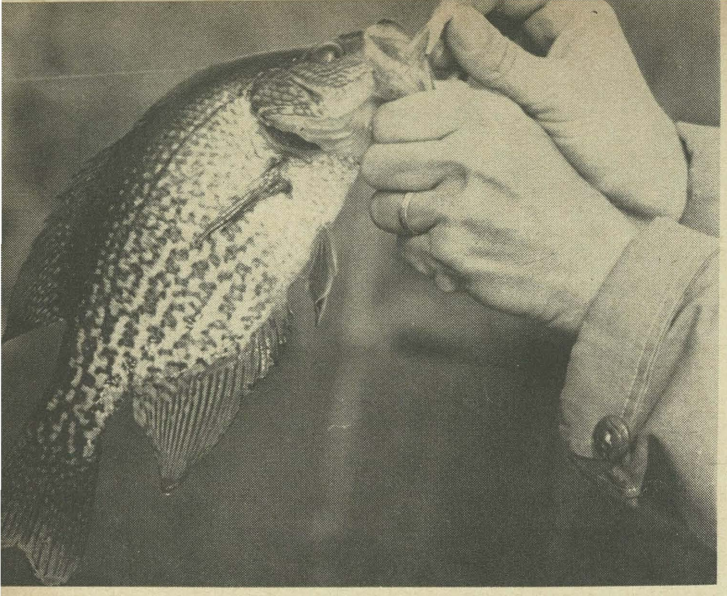


Bob Budd shows off four nice speckled perch, part of his limit catch of twenty five.



A No-Alibi jig proved to be the medicine for this nice speck.

(Continued from Preceding Page)

I knew the Florida specks ran man-sized and bowed to no fish at the table but I never had much interest in them until a couple of years ago. At that time, I condescended to fish for them and was humiliated to find the guy in the other end of the boat caught roughly twenty to my one. He was Bob Budd and I knew he was a good bass fisherman but this knack of catching specks was something he had kept from me. I slyly suspected some sort of foul play and when he displayed strings that weighed 35 pounds or more I was sure there was something that didn't meet the eye.

Announcing that you are the best speck fisherman in the county will not make you a celebrity, even if you can prove it, but fishing for specks with the right kind of tackle is a heck of a lot of fun and a lot of people who talk about sailfish cast for specks while they're doing it.

Most specks are caught on small minnows or worms although a few millions are snagged by dead slow trolling every year, taking small plugs, little spoons or jigs. It is not uncommon to see a new $30,000-cruiser moping along over a speck bed along with some old cypress skiff that cost $30 to build twenty years ago. I don't think that's the way to get the most out of old paper puss and it's not even the way to catch the most fish. The way I see it, the most sporty way of catching specks in our country is also the most productive. That method is using tiny jigs and light spinning tackle but you have to know how. I think I know now but it took a while.

Three years ago, I pulled up beside a boat in the St. Johns river for the purpose of sneering at a couple of acquaintances who were intently fishing a fallen tree in twenty feet of water. One of the anglers was the aforementioned Bob Budd and the other was Bob Wilber, at that time a medical student on vacation.

I asked to see the catch and Wilber tried to show it to me. He didn't make it the first time because the string had gotten heavier than he thought and he braced his feet and lifted again before it cleared the water. That's no wonder because he was hefting 50 pounds of fish. Some of them weighed around three pounds and my sneer faded a little. They were too busy catching specks to pay much attention to me and so I moved up the shoreline and tried it myself. I finally caught a couple, neither of which was big enough for a place on the stringer. I then began figuring a tactful way of getting in on that business.

It is not easy to get invited on a fishing trip when you are pretending that you don't really want to go but after making numerous slighting remarks about speck fishing I had to save some face. Finally, I agreed to go with Bob Budd, hoping I had not shown any trace of eagerness.

Bob put me in the front of the boat and manipulated a 3-horse motor from the stern without missing a cast, using feet, knees and what appeared to be several hands in the process. He loaned me a tiny, yellow jig for my light spinning outfit and put on a little white one himself, After an hour I figured I had been jobbed so I changed to a white one but I caught only two or three specks while Budd caught and threw back ten or twelve in looking for some to keep. I thought the ones he threw back were big enough for anybody.

Budd was using 4-pound monofilament line with a little below-the-hand closed face reel and a fingering gadget he made himself. He claimed the fingering gizmo gave him better accuracy but that wasn't the secret. He was fishing very slowly with regular lifts and drops of his rod tip but that wasn't the secret

Bob Wilber shows that he knows his way around the speck waters.

either because I imitated him—I thought. All of this time he was explaining to me how you catch specks and I was listening but it didn't soak in for a while.

A speck usually takes a jig like a pickpocket in a crowd of cops. Once in a while one gets in a hurry to beat out his friends and hits as if he meant business but for the most part he strikes like a snag on the bottom. Apparently his table manners are very tidy and gulping and yanking are taboo.

"Dead trees and brushy spots are the best," Budd kept saying. "You find a brush pile near deep water, maybe on a drop-off, and you cast 'er right in close. Then you wait until it hits bottom and lift it a little. Then you settle it back on the bottom and wait a little. Then you lift it again but if he takes it's usually on the fall back. He doesn't fool with anything that looks as if it might be much trouble. When you get one, keep on trying the spot. There may be a hundred there. If you don't get hung up, you may catch all you want—but generally you get hung up."

I generally got hung up but finally I began to catch specks—not my full share but quite a few. It was a little like feeling for a light button in the dark only you were feeling for specks in 20 feet of water.

On one open shoreline, Budd was really cleaning house and I was wasting my time.

"Here," said Bob, "look down there."

I looked and twenty feet out from shore there was a barely visible fringe of eel grass on the bottom in about six feet of water. On the offshore side of the grass the water deepened into darkness.

"Don't throw at the bank and don't throw into the deep water," Budd admonished. "Drop it into the eel grass and then bump it on down over the drop off, like this. Wup! I caught grass that time....No I didn't!" He wrestled a dinner-plate-sized speck around the idling motor and brought it aboard. So I hung in the grass and then bumped the drop off and then caught a speck.

A brush pile in the water spells crappie to this pair of fishermen.

Sometimes your jig doesn't reach bottom. It just starts sliding slowly off to one side and when you tighten up there's Mister Speck and sometimes he's nearly swallowed your lure.

If the tackle's right, there's a little scuffle when the victim goes over a pound and a half. Keep it to light spinning gear and a small line gets your jig down to the theatre of operations quickly. Big specks are not easily caught by heavers and haulers. They don't call them "papermouths" for nothing and the bigger he is the more delicately you handle him. It's nice to have a net for the whoppers.

Some of the better speck catchers figure you can clean out a hole in a couple of trips if they're biting good. It must be so because hot fishing in a given spot on succeeding days is pretty rare. No one ever said the speck won a quiz show.

Although the fish put up with an idling motor without complaint as long as you don't get it directly over them, they don't bite if you keep running it around their bailiwick while unsnagging jigs. Whether they actually leave or simply resist their hunger pains I don't know.

The best speck jiggers I know make short casts and they give good reasons for it.

"There's no use dragging a bait over water you know has no fish," says Budd. "If you throw 75-foot casts instead of 40-footers, your accuracy suffers and half of your retrieve is wasted. If you hang up, it's that much further into the crappie hideout. Then too, most of the jigs are pretty small and aren't comfortable to throw for long distances."

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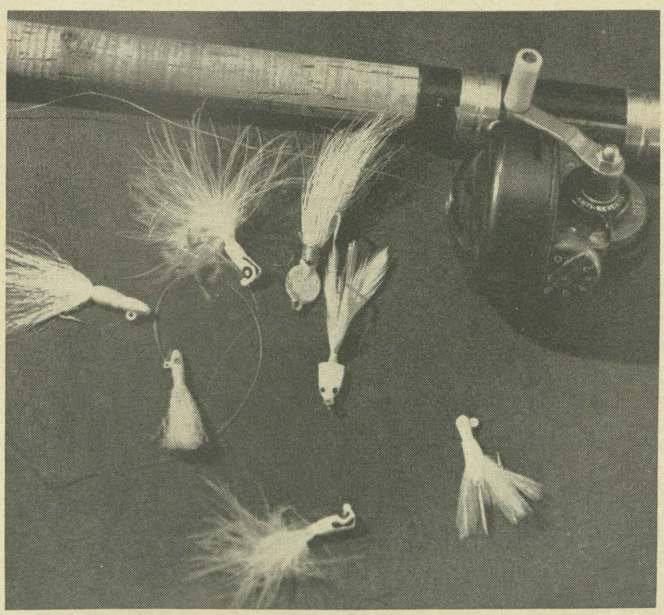


Typical of the small jigs used effectively for speckled perch.

In addition to some 30,000 named lakes, Florida has an abundance of rivers, creeks, ponds and sloughs.

FLORIDA'S FRESH WATERS

Part One: Introduction

By MORRIE NAGGIAR

Here are the facts on fresh water fishing in a state where geographical and biological conditions give the angler variety plus.

"I AM PLANNING to spend my vacation in Florida this year. Where is the best place to go fishing?"

The out-of-stater's note was short and to the point; he wanted to go fishing in Florida and he figured someone "on location" should be able to tell him where. That would all be well and good except for a couple of simple facts that cloud the issue. One is geographical in nature, the other biological.

First off there is a matter of the fish themselves. Authorities list 154 species that are found in the fresh waters of the state. Some of these are fishes that normally spend a considerable part of their lives in the briny and are therefore quite properly classified as marine species. Tarpon, channel bass (redfish), sheepshead, snook, and mangrove snapper are good examples of these. Regardless of their true status, in some parts of the state these fish furnish the bulk of the catch from waters that are strictly fresh.

Then, in the geography department, Florida contains an almighty lot of fishing waters within her boundaries. Consider the fresh water fishing situation; an angler could fish a different lake every day for 82 years and still he would not hit all of the named lakes in the state. Besides that there is a whole battery of lakes no one has bothered to tag, to say nothing of an impressive array of rivers, creeks, ponds and sloughs.

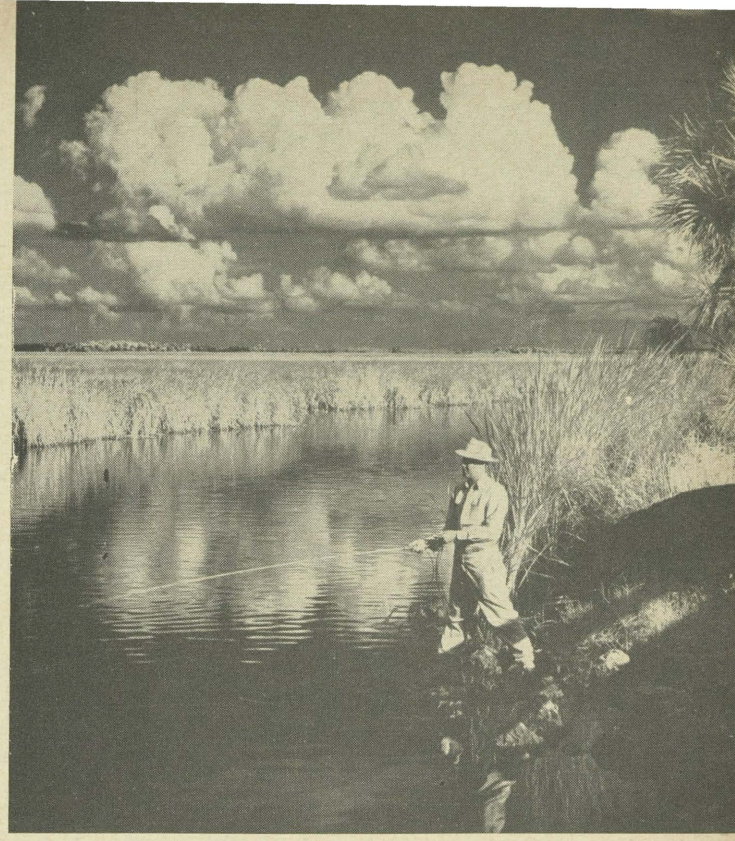
If there is one thing that is obvious to a fisherman who would guide a visiting Waltonian to angling in the home bailiwick it is the fact that he is treading on shaky ground. How many times have you fared forth with a visiting brother of the angle under your wing and had the "ole hotspot" turn the cold shoulder on your best efforts? It seems that the powers that be take a perverse delight in fouling up usually productive fishing waters at the most inopportune times.

Be that as it may, the visiting angler seeks specific information. Therefore, win, lose, or draw, the series of articles of which this is the first, will pinpoint specific locations. It is not the purpose to hold forth these spots as the best in the state. Whether they are or not certainly no one person is qualified to say. They do represent the top-rated selections of a battery of "on the ground," local authorities. If nothing else, the information provides a foot in the door—a starting point for personal exploration of what the various sections of the state have to offer in the way of fresh water fishing.

Let's take a brief look at some of the more common fresh water fishes of Florida by way of introducing the Sunshine State's fresh water angling potential.

There are at least 154 different species of fishes en-

Photo by Wallace Hughes



Above: The canals of the lower third of the state are generous producers of a variety of game fish.

Left: The chain pickerel is a ready striker on a variety of both natural and artificial baits.

countered in the fresh waters of Florida, a fact that has previously been indicated. Of this number, there are approximately 37 truly fresh water species with which the sport fisherman is likely to come in contact in one way or another.

BASS—To most fishermen, Florida and bass are practically synonymous. It is not without reason that this has come about for in these waters the bass reaches its ultimate in size, abundance, and scrappiness.

There has been no little amount of confusion over the status of the fresh water basses of the state. At one time it was generally believed, and quite widely acclaimed in the outdoor literature, that there were both smallmouths and largemouth bass in Florida. One "smallmouth" from Florida was at the head of the record list for several years before it was established that the specimen had been incorrectly identified from the beginning. There has been no authenticated record of a smallmouth bass taken from Florida waters.

There are five bass of the largemouth group represented in the state. These are the Suwannee Bass, the Northern Spotted Bass, Northern Largemouth, the Florida Largemouth, and the Coosa or Redeye Bass. This latter, it is interesting to note, is the species that caused quite a stir in fish management circles in late 1956. Originally believed to be the "lost" Chipola Bass, it was finally discovered that specimens from the Chipola River of west Florida actually represented a previously unrecognized extension of range of a more northerly species.

BREAM—Probably because the publicity showered on the largemouth bass far overshadows most other fresh water fishing, the drum is seldom loudly beat over Florida's excellent warm water panfish angling. Actually these sunfishes or "bream" probably contribute more poundage and certainly more in actual numbers in Florida's hook-and-line catch than any other group of fishes. Many of these scrappy cane pole and light tackle favorites are so similar in appearance that only the most avid angler seeks to separate them by species. Bluegill, banded sunfish, blue-spotted sunfish, redbreast, shellcracker and stump-knocker are examples of the species that are commonly lumped into one group. Not usually classified as bream but closely related scientifically are the rock bass and the speckled perch or crappie.

OTHER SPECIES—Five species of catfish are commonly caught by Florida anglers. These include the Channel cat, white cat, southern brown bullhead, snail cat, and the yellow cat. Usually the catfish are taken by bait fishermen specifically seeking them or, not in-

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The variety of fishing waters to be found within the state is reflected by the array of species available to the rod-and-reeler.

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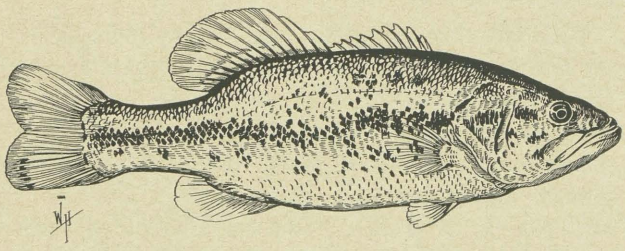
frequently, by bream anglers, although now and again both fly fishermen and plug casters find catfish eager for their lures.

Striped bass, in other parts of the country taken most often in brackish estuaries and from the salt waters along the coasts, are usually caught only in certain fresh waters this far south. A few years ago the striper was known as a fish of the St. Johns River area only, insofar as the Sunshine State was concerned. Now we realize that the Gulf drainage, at least from the Apalachicola River westward, has something of a striper population. Some spots have been fished for striped bass, or rockfish as they are commonly called locally, for many years. Bait fishermen sometimes tie into a striper while seeking other species. Night trolling with large plugs is a method used by some of the old hands at the Florida striped bass fishing game. It is possible, judging from presently available information, that there may be a fresh water race of the striper in the Apalachicola River drainage. Future research should settle this question.

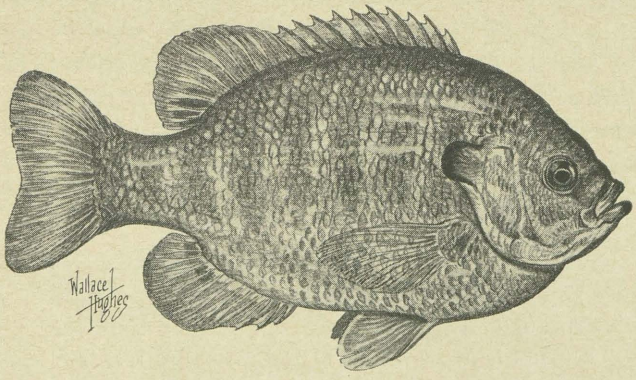
The American shad provides much sport each winter in parts of the St. Johns River. Because it is a consistent producer, the Lemon Bluff area on the St. Johns is the best known shadding water in the state. Trolling is the usual method of fishing for these hard hitting scrappers.

Lesser known is the somewhat smaller Alabama Shad. A close relative of the St. Johns River's American shad, the Gulf drainage is the home ground of this vitamin packed fish. Up to the present time this species has not been specifically sought to any great extent. They make their spawning runs during late winter and early spring. A small spoon, trolled slowly, is a good lure for the Alabama shad. Surprisingly enough for this group of fishes, usually not taken on bait, many Alabamas fall for earthworms and other commonly used natural baits being dunked for bream or catfish.

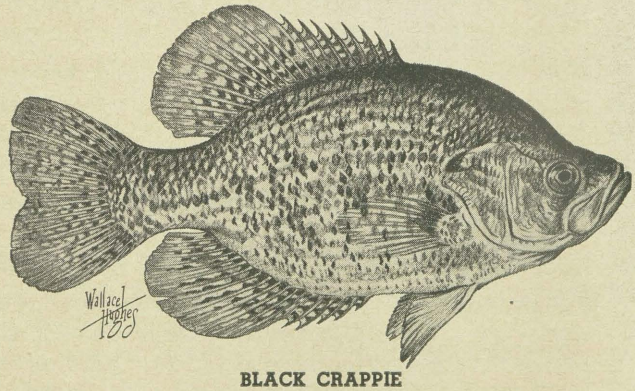
The chain pickerel is a fine, hard hitting game fish that has been all but neglected by the state's anglers.



BLACK BASS



BREAM



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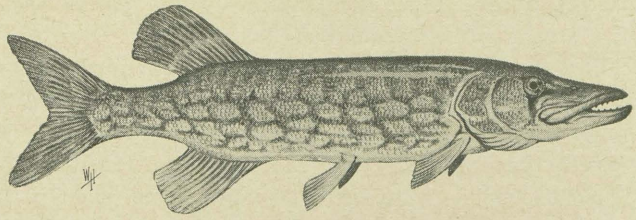

CHAIN PICKEREL

Slashing with eagerness at a variety of flies, plugs, spoons, and natural baits, they are usually taken as a by-product of bass or bream seking efforts. A smaller relative, the redfin pickerel, is also an eager striker but its size does nothing for its popularity with sportsmen.

The bowfin is a "trash fish" that frequently strikes plugs and spoons, especially when bounced along the bottom of pond, canal, or stream. Bass fishermen, using live shiners for bait, frequently tangle with the mudfish or grindle, other names commonly applied to the bowfin. The fish usually gives an excellent account of

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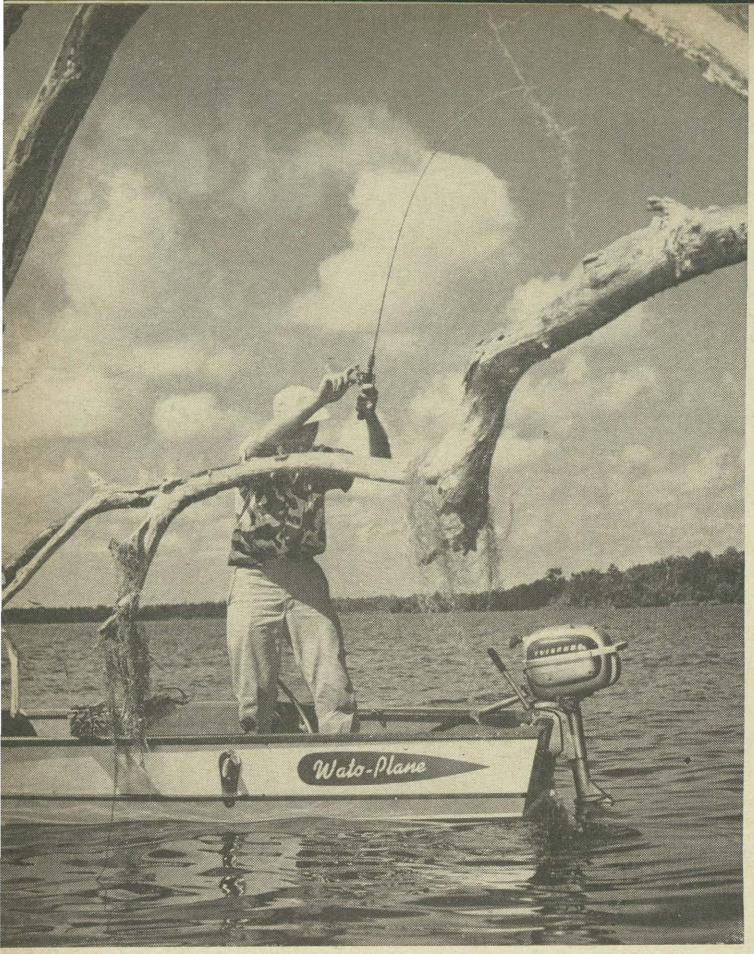
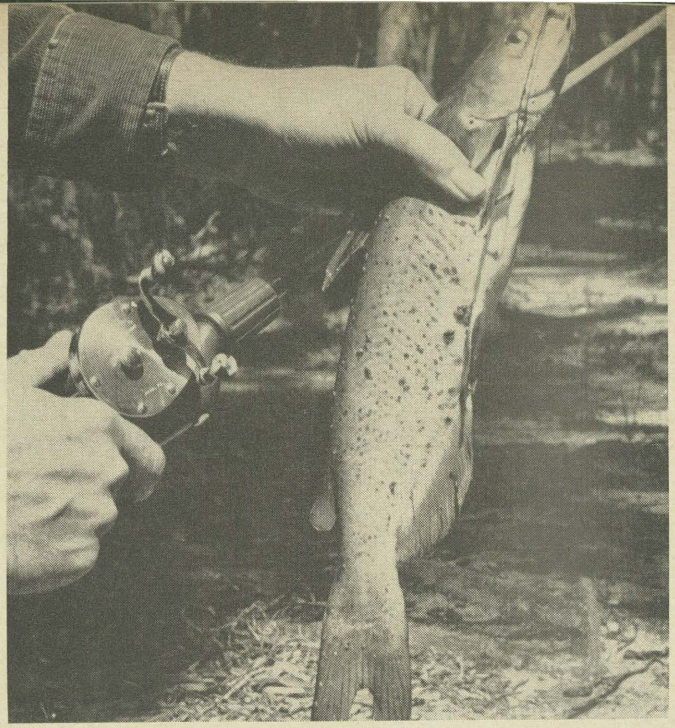
FLORIDA ANGLER'S CHECK LIST OF COMMON FISHES

COMMON NAME	WHERE FOUND IN STATE	FAVORED TYPE OF WATER
Suwannee Bass	Suwannee River drainage	Fast flowing streams
Northern Spotted Bass	Apalachicola R. Westward	Rivers, larger creeks
Redeye Bass	Chipola River system	Clear, fast-flowing streams
Northern Largemouth Bass	Northern and Panhandle	Variety; lakes, rivers, ponds
Florida Largemouth Bass	Peninsular area	Variety; lakes, rivers, ponds
Warmouth	Throughout	All; swampy shored lakes, ponds
Stump-knocker	South to Highlands Co.	Lakes and connecting streams
Shellcracker (Redear)	Throughout	Larger lakes, rivers
Redbreast	South to central portion	Streams
Long-ear Sunfish	Northwest portion	Streams
Dollar Sunfish	South to central portion	Streams, small ponds
Bluegill	Throughout	Variety
Banded Sunfish	South to central portion	Streams
Blue-spotted Sunfish	All except west panhandle	Lakes, slow moving streams
Black-banded Sunfish	Northern, to Marion Co.	Weedy sand hill lakes
Southern Rock Bass	Panhandle	Deep streams
Mud Perch	Northern, s. to Alachua Co.	Swamp Creeks
Speckled Perch (Crappie)	Throughout	Larger lakes, rivers
Flier	South to Central Florida	Streams, lakes
Redfin Pickerel	South to Okeechobee area	Swamps, small streams
Chain Pickerel	Throughout	Lakes, larger rivers
Channel Catfish	South to Okeechobee area	Rivers and streams
White Catfish	South to Okeechobee area	Larger streams
Southern Brown Bullhead	Throughout	All types
Snail Cat	South to Central portion	Streams with current
Yellow Cat	Throughout	All types
Bowfin (mudfish)	Throughout	All types
American Shad	Atlantic coastal rivers	Larger streams
Alabama Shad	Larger Panhandle streams	Larger streams
Quillback Sucker	Panhandle	Rivers and streams
Blacktail Redhorse	Western panhandle	Rivers and streams
Spotted Sucker	Suwannee drainage west	Rivers
Alabama Chubsucker	Northern and western areas	Rivers
Eastern Chubsucker	Throughout	Variety
Carp	Apalachicola River westward	Ponds, rivers, lakes
Northern Spotted Gar	Western panhandle	Variety
Florida Spotted Gar	North and peninsula	Variety
Longnose Gar	Throughout	Larger streams, lakes
Alligator Gar	Westernmost panhandle	Large streams



With a finny scrapper waging a bulldozing battle only an experienced hand call tell which of a dozen possible species he has hooked.



The channel catfish ranks high in popularity with many Florida fishermen, is a ready biter, a pretty fair fighter, and first rate on the table.

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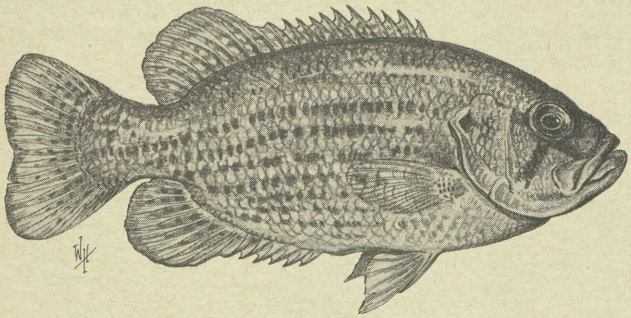
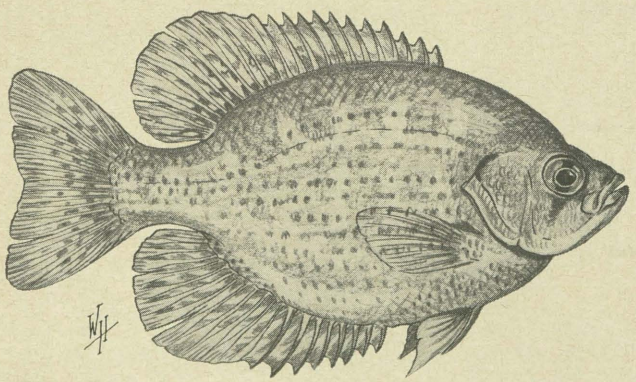
itself when pitted against spinning tackle or bait casting gear. Most people do not care to eat the bowfin, partially, no doubt, because of its far from handsome appearance. They are able to tolerate conditions that are fatal to other fishes such as bream and bass. Bowfins are able to get along nicely in drought shrunken waters that have been reduced to little more than mud holes.

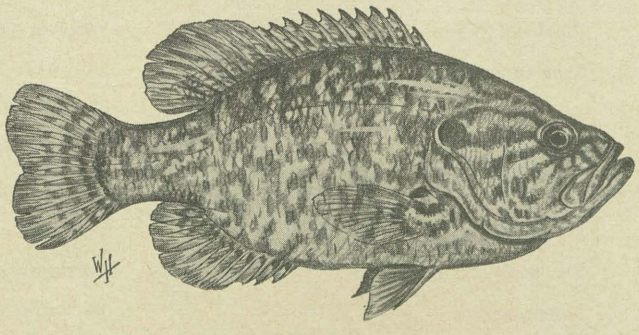
Gar, common in most of the fresh waters of the state, are seldom considered to be anything other than predacious pests. They are hard fighters on suitable tackle however, and provide much sport for those who have learned the knack of hooking or snaring them. In the extreme western portion of the Panhandle, the Alligator gar is occasionally the object of angling efforts by fishermen seeking something different in the way of piscatorial activities. Heavy tackle is needed to handle these fish which sometimes reach a hefty 100 pounds or more. Many fishermen find a gun a useful



ROCK BASS

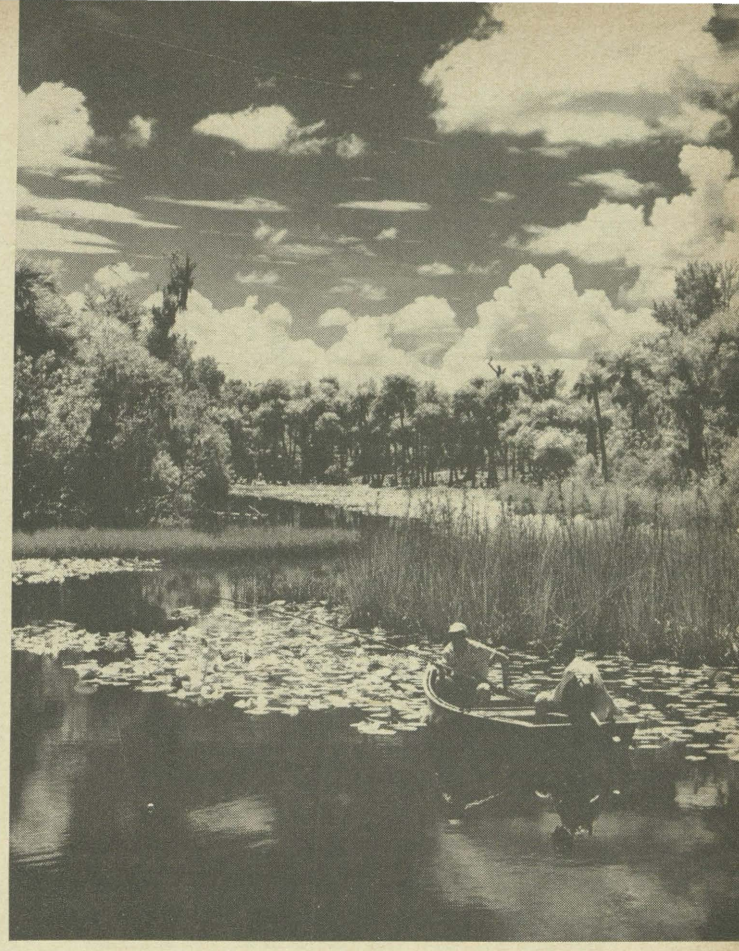


FLIER



WARMOUTH

Holding down the top position among the fresh water game fishes of the state is the largemouth bass, five varieties of which occur in Florida.



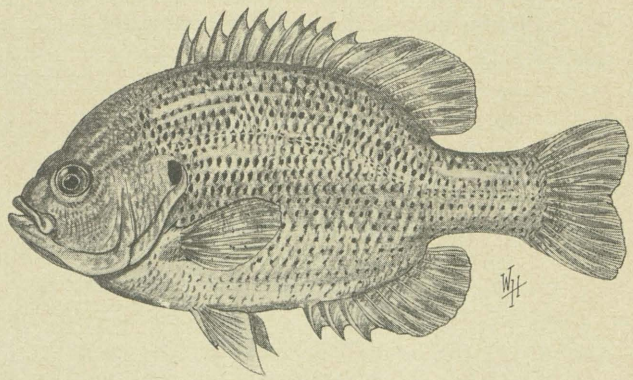
Florida offers the contemplative angler hundreds of small lakes and quiet, secluded ponds many of which seldom visited by fishermen.

tool in putting the coup de gras on an alligator gar that has been fought up to the side of the boat.

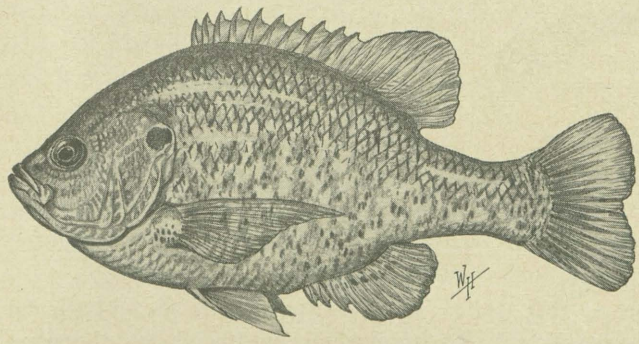
Considerable numbers of suckers, representing three species, are found in various waters of the state. Locally they are avidly sought, especially during the spring months when they gather for the spawning runs. Quillback, blacktail redhorse and spotted sucker are the three species represented in Florida's waters. Those taken by anglers usually succumb to a worm-baited hook.

Waters of the Panhandle also host a sizeable population of carp. Utilized only to a limited extent for food, they attain considerable size. Trotline fishermen, as well as rod and reelers and cane polers, not infrequently hook 20- to 30-pounders and undoubtedly there are much heavier specimens landed now and then. The slower reaches of the Apalachicola River drainage especially seems to favor this fairly scrappy but looked-down-upon fish. ●

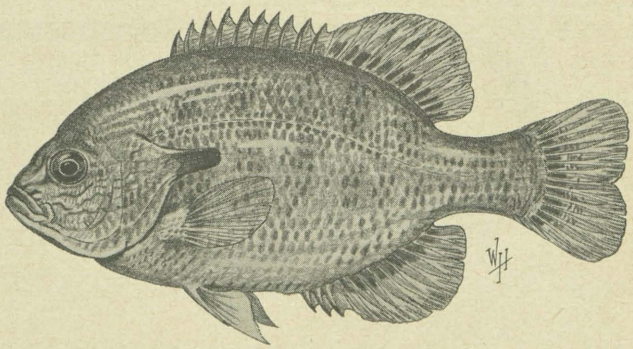
(Next Month — Part Two: South Florida Region)



STUMPKNOCKER



SHELLCRACKER



REDBREAST

What bait and hook size? The manner in which a particular fish species takes its food, the size and shape of its mouth and the size of the fish sought should always be considered when selecting both lures and hooks.

BE SURE TO GET THE POINT

Your lowest cost tackle item is the most important. When selecting hooks, a concerted effort should be made to choose proper size and style.

By EDMUND McLAURIN

IF YOU ARE INCLINED to feel a bit guilty about going fishing when the lawn needs to be mowed, the car washed or some window screens repaired, don't let it weigh long on your conscience. You're merely doing what comes naturally; man has always fished—but not always for sport.

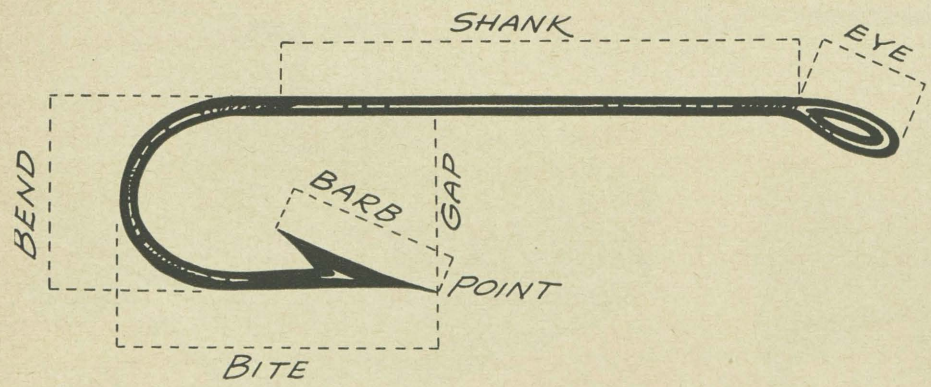
Artifacts unearthed in all parts of the world by the inquisitive picks of archaeologists indicate that, in his quest for food, primitive man soon discarded his barbed spear in favor of a fishhook.

Discoveries have established the first hooks were gorges fashioned from bone, wood and stone, being merely crossbar affairs tapered toward both ends and with a groove cut around their middles to accept crude lines of vine, braided fiber and even human hair.

The working principle of the gorge was simple: after being attached to the line, the crude hook was hidden in a ball of bait, with the line parallel to the gorge. When a fish swallowed the bait, the gorge would immediately seat itself crosswise in the fish's gullet under line tension.

Old Stone Age Man used the gorge; so did members of the Makah Indian tribe, as late as 1880, in Washington-state territory.

Even today crude, handmade fishhooks can be found among people

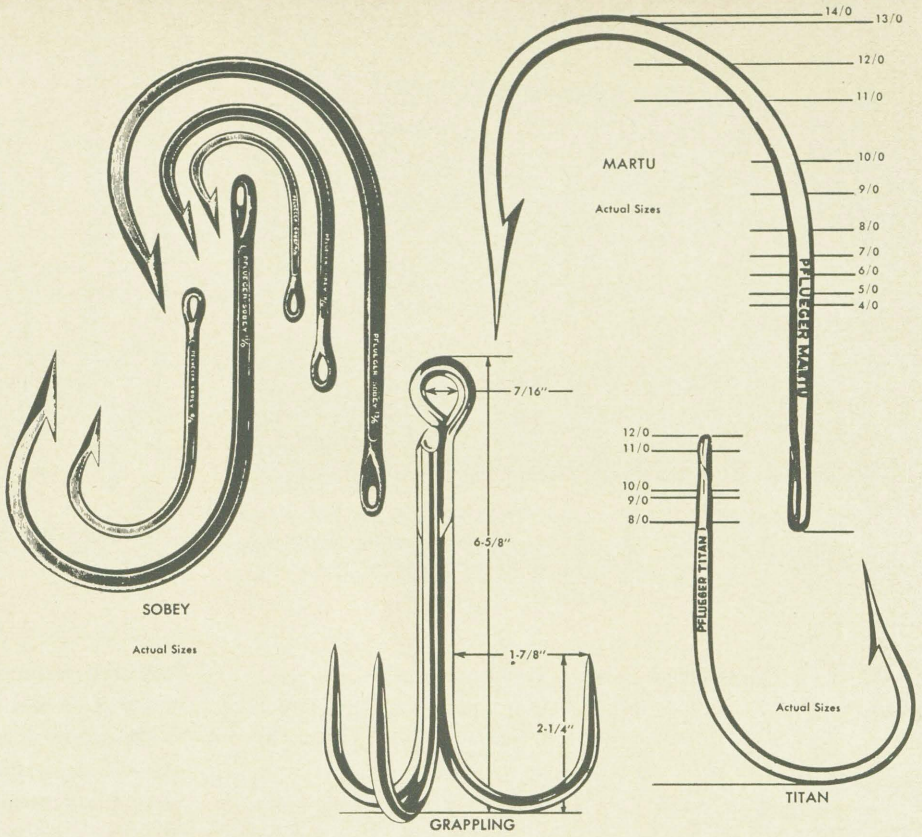


There are seven major components or physical features to the average fish hook.

living in remote sections of the world. Eskimos have long made practical use of an iron barb set in a piece of ivory. Polynesian and Fiji natives know how to fashion fishhooks from wood, shark teeth and shaped pearl shell, and curved stone and human bone fishhooks occasionally are used by Easter Island inhabitants. But the universal availibilty of modern fishhooks is fast making such primitive improvisions rare.

Although hooks are still an angler's basic need, the average sport fisherman knows very little about them. That fact becomes obvious when he is asked to tell you what he knows about hooks!

Aside from being able to correctly name such common component parts as the point, barb, shank and eye, few anglers readily recognize the more common variations of these four components, nor are they generally acutely conscious of other influencing features, like hook gap, throat and temper.



Sobey, Martu, Titan and Grappling hook styles.

To make average hook identification easy for the sport fisherman, a brief review of hook nomenclature and term definitions, followed by a resume of the more common patterns, is in order:

Component Parts

There are seven major components or physical features to the average fishhook—point, barb, shank, eye, bend, gap and throat (or bite). Certain of these need further explanation.

Bend: A hook's bend is at its bottom or curved portion....While it has become common practice to consider a hook's bend as being a particular pattern, like the Sobey and the radically different Aberdeen patterns, technically there are only three basic bends—straight, reversed and kirbed.

A hook of straight bend has its point parallel with its shank; a kirbed bend has its point offset to the left of the shank as you face the point, and a reverse bend is one that is offset to the right.

Gap: The distance or clearance between the point of a hook and its shank.

Throat (or bite): The distance from hook point to the bottom of the hook's bend or curve.

Shank: The upright portion of the hook that extends from the eye to the bend, on the side opposite to the point.

Hook shanks are made in various lengths, diameters, degrees of temper and pattern shapes. You can purchase them straight with and without ringed eye, barbed on their backs, humped and with turned up eye, curved down with turned up eye, triangular, knobbed, bent up with ring eye and round, oval or forged flat, in just about any length desired.

It is the leverage of a hook's shank that causes it to penetrate, whether the shank is long or short.

Hook Eyes: Designed for attaching leader or line, hook eyes are given various shapes and bends, the more common styles being the ringed eye, flat eye, ball eye, tapered eye, turned up and turned down eyes, brazed eye, looped eye and needle eye. These, in turn, are combined with the different types of hook shanks, bends and barbs to create a wide range of finished hook styles.

Points: In hook point styles there is also a wide choice. Spear, hollow ground, needle, barbless, twin barb, arrow, spade, bent out spear, bent in, rolled and straight point are all individual selections. Besides variations in their shapes, they frequently vary markedly in length of point. Generally, hooks with long points are best for all fish except those with thin, soft mouths. The hollow and needle point styles give especially fast penetration if kept sharp—as all fishhooks should be. (Sharpen a hook by filing or honing it on both sides from the inside only.)

Also, barbless hooks made with a hump in the wire instead of a barb will hook and land a greater percentage of strikes than the barbed variety, provided the angler maintains proper line tension after fish are hooked.

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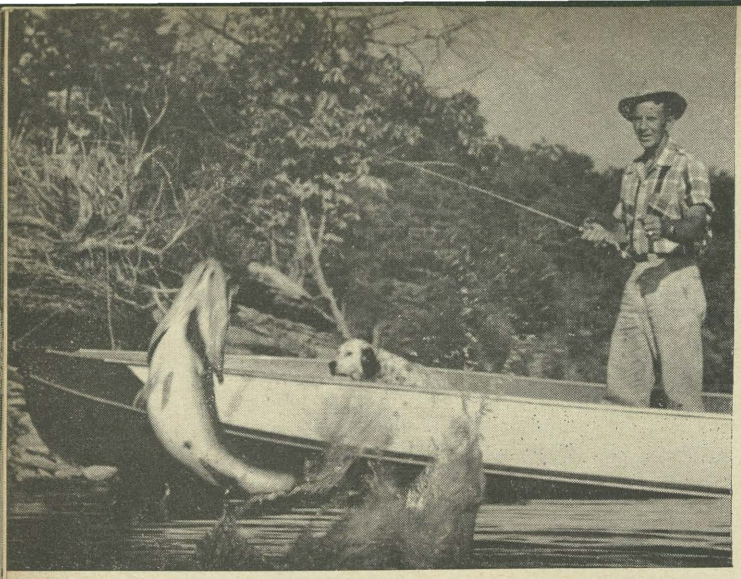
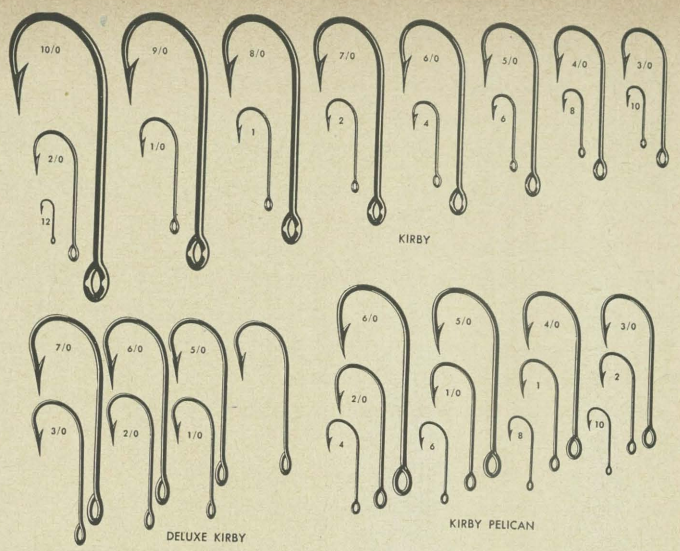


A quality-made hook proves its worth when you battle the big ones! Cheap, poorly-made hooks often fail to penetrate properly, break off or straighten out, or come off leader or line when hook eye opens under strain.



The Kirby pattern is much like the Sproat but with definite offset.

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Hooks with stiff weed guards, on the other hand, may often contribute to too many missed strikes, by presenting the point too late or insufficiently.

It is largely a good combination of hook bend, tempered shank, gap and point, in relation to the line of exerted pull, that makes one style hook superior to another for a specific job. H. C. Pennell, English author of THE MODERN PRACTICAL ANGLER, reduced the working objectives and mechanics of the ideal fishhook to simple language when he described the perfect fishhook as one of sure penetration, holding power, strength, lightness and neatness. He also wrote "the greatest penetrating power of a fishhook occurs when the line of penetration is coincident with the direction of force applied."

Hook Sizes: The manner in which a particular species takes its food, the size and shape of its mouth and the size of the fish sought should always be considered when selecting both hook size and pattern.

To designate the sizes of the various hook patterns, finished hooks are numbered from about No. 22 or 20, increasing in size as numbers get lower. From No. 1, they add a zero and start back up the scale, becoming size 1/0, 2/0, 3/0, 4/0, 5/0, etc.—each higher number representing a larger size—through about 16/0 size, the latter representing the giant tuna hooks.

There is also a standard table for designating hook shank lengths, but space does not permit a description. Besides, not all hook manufacturers adhere strictly to the standard designations when labeling their packaged products.

Popular Hooks

O'Shaughnessy: This hook style originated in England and now is well known to both fresh and salt water fishermen the world over, being a strong, dependable hook of good hooking properties. In a quality product, it is always forged, with special attention to making shank and bend flat on sides.

Probably more salt water sport fish have been taken on O'Shaughnessy hooks than any other style. It is very popular for redfish (channel bass), croaker, and bluefish and offshore anglers use it with success on much larger species.

In sizes 4 to 1 (preferably the smaller No. 4) combined with monofilament line and live shrimp, the O'Shaughnessy hook can be deadly for mangrove snapper fishing. Also, a size No. 1, honed to added sharpness, and baited with a fiddler crab, is good for sheepshead when you lack a regular Sheepshead pattern hook.

Sproat: A strong and popular hook of nearly round bend and possessing a straight point, not offset. An early English style, the Sproat pattern has enjoyed great popularity and widespread use by American anglers.

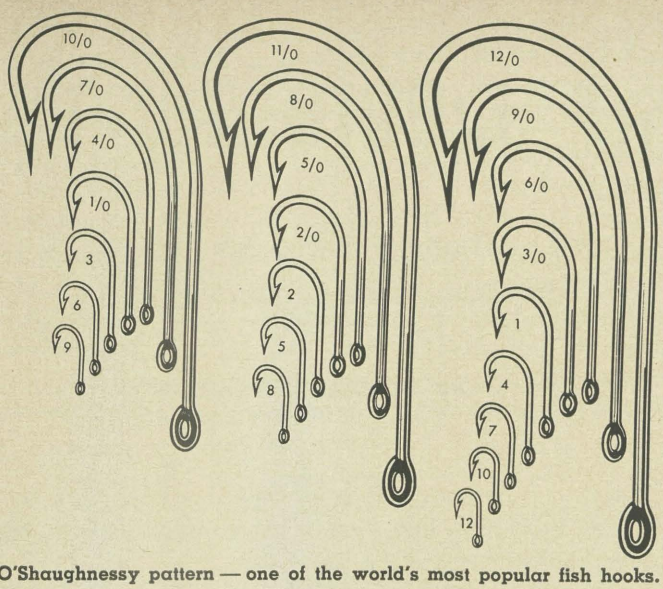
Fresh water fishermen find the Sproat a most effective, dependable hook for natural baits and also incorporate the heavier shanks in large salmon and steelhead wet flies.

A size No. 8 Sproat hook and live minnows or shrimp is a recommended combination for Florida crappie fishing with cane pole and quill float bobber.

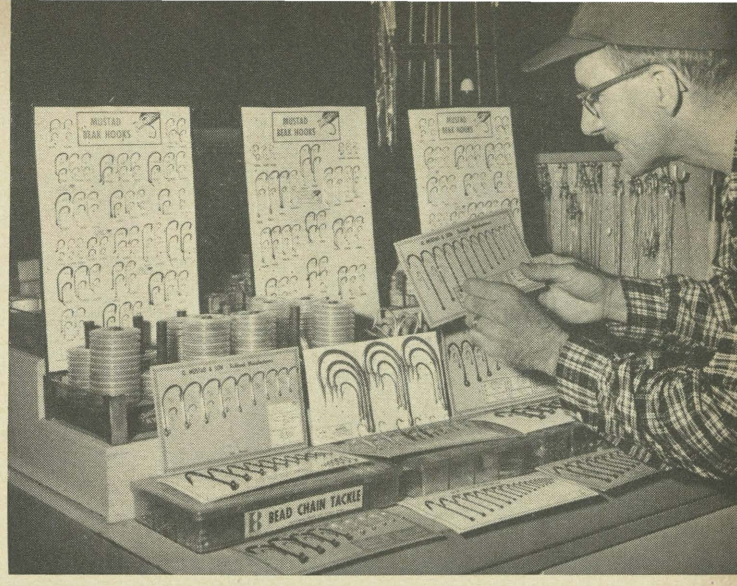
Similarly, salt water anglers give the Sproat pattern hook diversified use—size No. 1/0 for flounder, 4/0 for bluefish, 1/0 to 4/0 for weakfish (salt water trout), 5/0 to 7/0 for redfish (channel bass) and 1/0 to 3/0 for such species as croaker, porgy, ling and sea bass.

The Sproat style tends to hold well, once set, a reason for its popularity.

Kirby: Originally English, the Kirby is a hook pattern much like the Sproat, but with a definite offset, and so named because of being bent out of line with its shank.



O'Shaughnessy pattern — one of the world's most popular fish hooks.



Time devoted to selection of the proper style and size hook for planned fishing is never wasted, can mean the difference between bringing home a nice catch or returning fishless.

Anglers believe the offset or kirbed point is less likely to be pulled out of a fish's mouth than a hook with a bend and point in direct line with hook shank.

Actually, as most experts will tell you, offset hooks generally give slow and shallow penetration, are more quickly detected by biting fish than straight bend hooks and usually result in missed strikes if a fish hits an offset hook on its blind side.

However, Kip Farrington, internationally famous big game fisherman, disagrees. He says, "I believe it is definitely a good idea to kirb a hook a trifle, particularly for the marlin or swordfish. Marlin hooks used in New Zealand and Australian waters are invariably of the offset style."

A variation of the Kirby is the American Chestertown, a hook with a fairly narrow gap and a medium shank, used for sucking feeders like flounder, whitefish and ling.

Aberdeen: Another hook pattern of English origin, invariably made of light wire, with a round bend and a wide gap. It is ideal for use with live minnows and, despite its lightness and tendency to straighten when snagged, will hold small bass, bluegills, sunfish and crappie.

A very popular modification of the pattern is the Eagle Claw Aberdeen, featuring a claw-shaped point in contrast to the original Aberdeen straight-point hook design.

Carlisle and Cincinnati Bass: The early English Carlisle and the American-developed Cincinnati Bass patterns are somewhat similar, both having round bends, long shanks and kirbed points, with the bass model usually being made of heavier wire than the Carlisle.

The two are very good for fresh water fishing with live bait. A size No. 8 Carlisle hook is a good one for bluegill fishing with live bait, cane pole and small bobber, while a size No. 1/0 hook in the Cincinnati Bass pattern makes an all-around bass hook, used with minnows, small frogs and earthworms.

Limerick: The bend of the long, slender shank Limerick pattern is gradual, creating a somewhat half round shape, with a sharp angle that turns into a straight spear point. These characteristics may vary slightly among different brands. The Limerick is a handsome hook in appearance and one popular among fly-casters tieing their own streamer fly patterns.

Commercial fishermen, whose livelihoods depend on their fishing success, have their hook preferences, too, selections being influenced by the type of fishing followed, geographical location of angling activity and nature of water and bottom conditions fished.

In New England, for example, the Atlantic Limerick hook pattern is extremely popular for logical reasons: It is a large-eyed hook, making for easy attachment of large diameter looped or doubled, tarred line, and is tempered fairly soft so that the hook will straighten out and release itself when fouled on a rocky bottom, yet can be readily bent back into shape for re-use.

Also popular in the same section is the Gravitation pattern hook, similarly made with a large eye but with its shank bent back slightly a short distance below the ring.

Gulf Coast commercial fishermen find such patterns as the O'Shaughnessy, Sproat, Kirby Sea and the Limerick highly productive and guides catering to Gulf Stream sport fishing charters like strong, forged hooks as found in the Sobey, Martu, Mustad and Auburn tarpon, Evans, O'Shaughnessy and Zane Gray versions.

On the Pacific Coast, where salmon, tuna and herring are the most sought fish species, the Siwash, Double Round Tuna, Herring Bait and Halibut hook styles take preference.

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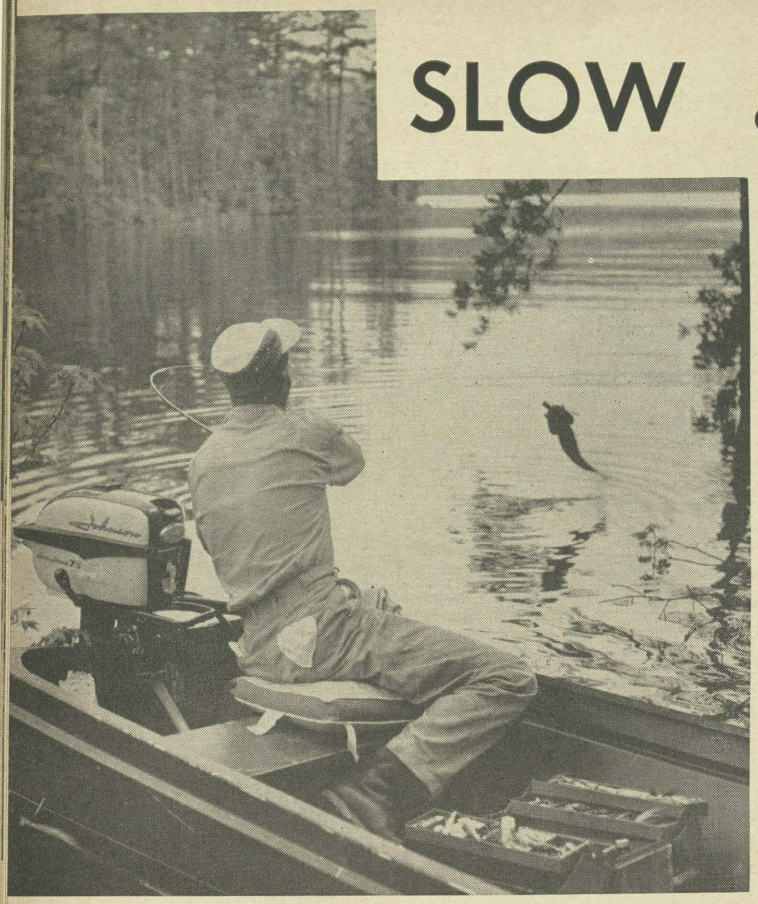
SLOW and DELIBERATE

That's the way to fish for lunker size largemouth bass.

By RUSSELL TINSLEY



Slow and deliberate though this largemouth may have been in taking the deep running lure, the bite of the hook brought a fast and frantic reaction.

WE WERE EASING CAUTIOUSLY parallel to shore, Bill in the bow casting and me manning the oars. Bill shaded his eyes and scanned the shoreline. Suddenly he lifted his casting rod and with a flick of the wrist sent his surface lure — one of those torpedo-like affairs with propellers fore and aft — into a secluded pocket no larger than a wash tub.

He motioned toward me and I quit rowing. The lure lay there limply, rocking gently with the breeze. After an antagonizing lull, Bill twitched it seductively, paused a few moments longer, then moved it again. Almost simultaneous with the second twitch, the water around the lure exploded and it disappeared. Bill set the hooks into a two-pound bass that immediately took to the air furiously. He played it out, slipped the hooks free and watched the befuddled bass spurt back to cover.

"Your turn," he said, passing the casting rig to me.

We changed places and Bill propelled us smoothly along shore. I searched for a likely looking spot, then lobbed my lure into it. A moment after it hit, I pulled it toward me an inch or two.

"Too quick," Bill hissed. "Slow it down."

After fishing that location a couple of times, I retrieved and looked for another place. A few dozen yards up shore and I sighted a cup-like pool between two ancient decaying stumps that literally screamed bass. The lure landed lightly up near one of the protruding logs, one of my better casts of the day.

"Easy now," Bill instructed, leaning forward to watch the plug. "I'll tell you when."

The ripples from the lure died completely. The plug rested quietly. After a half minute or so, Bill whispered, "Now!" and I jerked the plug ever so slightly, just enough to turn the propellers.

This time the ripples were lost in a seething swirl which also took the plug from sight. I set back on the rod and grinned at Bill when a mad bass, about a pound, exploded skyward.

"You're catching on fast," Bill jibed, and I took the ribbing goodheartedly. It wasn't the first time that he had to warn me to slow down. Like most run-of-the-mill bass anglers, I have a tendency to fish too fast.

Last summer I was chatting with outdoors writer Ira (Stocke) Stockebrand, an expert bass angler who has fished in most of the United States and in Canada and Mexico, and he said the two most common blunders of a novice bass fisherman are to fish in the wrong spots and to fish too fast.

"Most beginning anglers don't know a good bass spot when they see one," he explained. "And once they discover a hotspot they fish it haphazardly and too fast."

As a foot-note to his observations, I might add that this applies to many experienced fishermen too, especially the fault of fishing too fast.

Speed is important in all phases of fishing, especially so when after the temperamental largemouth black bass. In bass angling it is nigh impossible to fish too slowly. A good rule is to take your present fishing technique and slow it in half. It may seem ridiculous at first, but in the long run it will put more fish on the stringer.

This speed factor doesn't apply just to surface plugging, either. Most anglers also retrieve underwater lures too rapidly. Often a slight alternation of the retrieve, normally to a slower pace, will make the difference between success and failure.

I learned this one warm may morning a few years back. Dave and I were fishing sinking plugs along the fringe of some hyacinth growth. We'd cast up near the

wall of vegetation, allow our plugs to sink near bottom, then retrieve in standard fashion — moderately fast. This system had paid off many times in the past.

We drifted along the lake shore, working furiously. No luck. We floated past a boat where a still fisherman was dunking a shiner minnow, working our plugs deep every foot of the way.

As we passed, the fisherman called: "What you fellows trying to do? Set some sort of casting record?"

We stopped casting momentarily and rowed over to where he was anchored. If there is one thing I've learned about fishing, it is to accept constructive criticism whenever it beckons — especially when it comes from someone who knows what he is talking about, and this deeply tanned angler definitely spoke with authority.

"What do you mean," I questioned curiosuly, "about trying to set a casting record?"

"It isn't that you're casting too much," the elder fisherman said. "It's just that you're working your lures much too fast. Slow 'em up and I'd bet you'll catch fish."

I pondered his sage advice. Perhaps he had something. At least it was worth a gamble. We surely weren't setting the world on fire at our present pace.

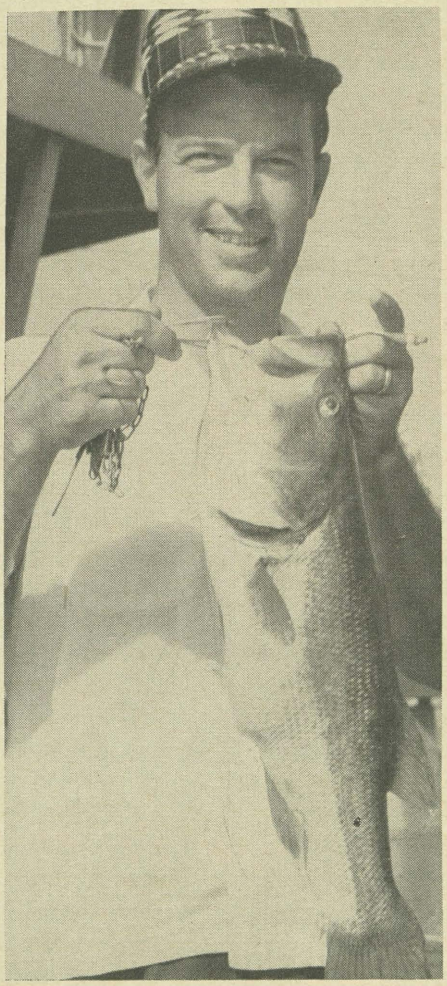
Thanking the oldtimer for his help, we continued down the shoreline. I dropped my lure almost against the hyacinths and Bill's plopped a few feet forward. Allowing the bait to flutter deep, I started it provocatively homeward, much slower than before. I'd just completed my retrieve, poised to recast when I heard Bill yelp. Almost in unison a nice bass catapulted upward, twisting and turning.

By noon we had four keeper bass on our stringers, all taken on those identical sinking plugs but this time worked at a snail's-pace down near bottom. That slight change in strategy had made the difference.

One reason natural bait fishermen catch more bass than pluggers, in many instances, is because the live-bait anglers get their baits down to the desired depths and let them remain there indefinitely, one prerequisite to successful bass angling.

On the other hand, next time you visit your favorite bass hole, pick out some angler and watch him in action a few minutes. You'll be able to classify him almost instantly. The beginner will be reeling frantically, trying to cover as much water as possible, while the experienced fisherman will be pin-pointing his casts and retrieving slowly.

There are times, of course, when a faster retrieve is the prescription for putting bass on the business end of your fish line. A sound formula is to start with an ultra-slow retrieve — experimenting with it thoroughly before changing — then gradually increasing the speed. If the bass are hitting, you'll eventually chance upon the magic combination.



A slow, bottom bouncing retrieve yielded this nice largemouth.

The two extremes that I have discovered are these:

One summer day, when all other methods failed, I caught a nice string of bass simply by bouncing a plug along the bottom, letting it rest idly in one spot for several seconds before I jerked it forward slightly with a flip of the rod tip.

On another day, I had grand succes by skittering a surface plug, never pausing in my retrieve. I'd cast near bank and start reeling practically the instant the plug kissed the surface. For some inexplicable reason, that steady sputtering retrieve drove the bass into a frenzy.

Generally speaking, which a man ought never do when talking of bass fishing, I've found that a slow retrieve consistently will put more fish on the stringer than will a fast one. A largemouth naturally is a slow and deliberate feeder, and to try and hurry one is bordering on the foolhardy. You must pattern your retrieve to the fancy of Mr. Mossback if you hope to return home with proof of your fishing prowess.

My favorite retrieve of an underwater bait is to cast into likely looking water, allowing the bait to sink to the desired depth. (The depth is dictated as to where the fish are feeding.) I reel very slowly and about every twenty turns of the reel handle, I jerk the rod tip slightly where the bait will dart forward and flutter, much like a crippled minnow attempting to escape a foraging bass. In most circumstances this retrieve will work. Otherwise, a slowing or speeding up of the retrieve is the answer.

When fishing a top-water plug, I cast and slowly count to twenty before twitching the plug; to fifteen before moving it the second time; to ten before jerking it again; and finally five before retrieving and recasting. This is a sure-fire system that will slow your retrieve to the desired speed—deliberate and tempting.

Some fishermen go overboard when fishing a surface bait, letting

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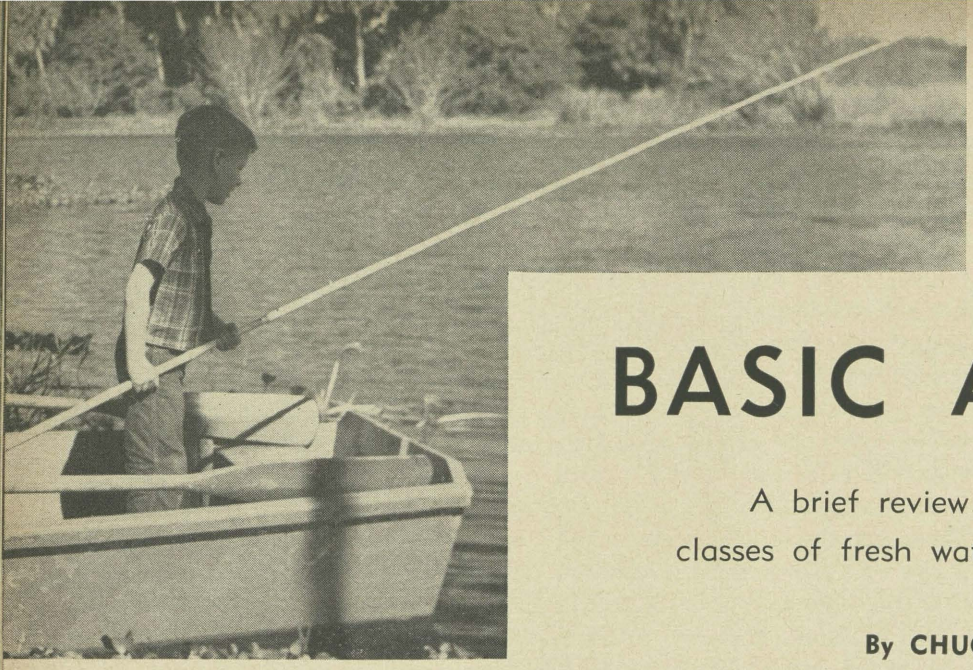


In the beginning, a small boy, a cane pole, and pan fish start a chain reaction that can last a lifetime.

BASIC ANGLING

A brief review of the four general classes of fresh water, light tackle angling.

By CHUCK SCHILLING

REVIEWING THE BASIC PROBLEMS of angling is like making love to an old maid — it just can't be overdone. All fishing experts are herewith invited to skip this piece. I am writing this to recall and recap these angling techniques and present them to the many fledgling fishermen among us, who have not as yet achieved super-expert stature (that includes me).

All too often, the expert angler forgets that the basic principles he follows by second nature may be all Greek to the novice. Please remember that knowing these things is not enough—it's doing them that counts.

I will briefly touch on the four general classes of fresh water, light tackle angling, taking them up in their order of difficulty. The opinions expressed here will be my own and probably will differ from many another, but this is the way I see it.

Plug Casting

This, to my way of thinking, is the most difficult method of angling. To be a truly expert plug caster requires long practice, perfect coordination and timing, and a deep understanding of the elements involved. In no other field of light tackle do so many participants make so many mistakes and achieve such dismal results.

The bait or plug casting reel, with its multiplying gears and level wind mechanism, is strictly an American invention. We dreamed it up, and we have been abusing it ever since. The problem is one of friction, momentum, and inertia. The lure must be heavy enough to pull the line from the reel by making the spool revolve. The cast must be vigorous enough to break the inertia of the reel and put it into instant and rapid movement. This builds up momentum, which must be controlled as the plug slows down due to line friction and air resistance. This control must come from an educated thumb. Lack of control results in backlashes.

The only plug casters who never get a backlash are my fellow members of The National Professional Casters Association. Paid up members of our organization are allowed to use the term "override." Whatever you call it, a backlash is no joke—it's the stumbling block that separates the men from the boys in the plug casting division.

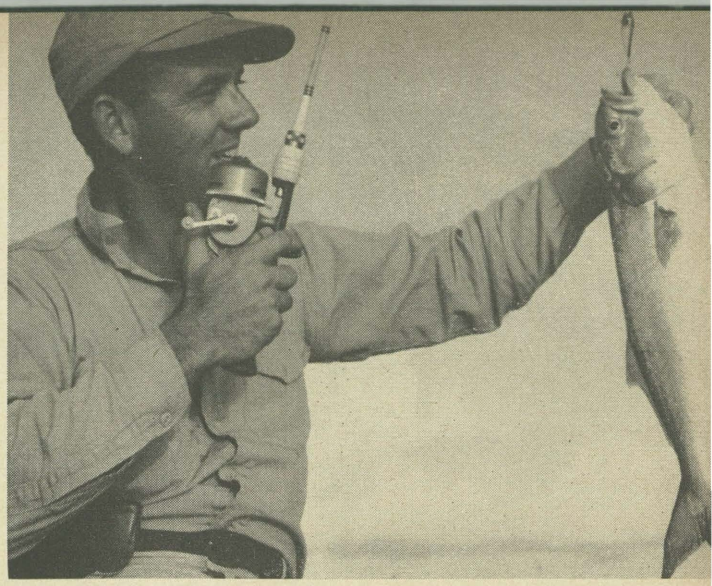
Most anglers who don't know will buy a new casting reel after first spinning the handles on a number of them, picking out the one that runs the smoothest. This generally means a reel whose gears, spool, and handle build up so much momentum they spin like a flywheel. If you have ambitions to be an expert plug caster, shun such a reel like the plague.

Look, instead, for a lightweight reel with an aluminum spool and light gears (usually nylon). The best of these will spin very little when you give the handles a flip. Don't forget — the heavier the spool, gears, and handle, the more vigorous the cast must be to get them started and the more momentum you will have built up that will demand control.

The length and action of a plug casting rod must be balanced to the reel you are going to use and to the type of cast you are going to employ. Putting a fast tip rod together with a heavy spool reel just won't work. Most experts use the light reels with a 5½ or 6 foot glass rod with a fast tip action. They use the overhand, snap cast, moving the wrist only. This requires the reel to start instantly with a minimum of effort.

To a great extent, the fishing line you use will put a limit on your plug casting success. The heavier the line, the tougher the casting. The super-experts use 4 or 6 pound test silk line, but most good, average, plug casters are content with 10 or 12½ pound soft braided nylon. To operate efficiently, even the best of reels must be kept clean and well oiled. A reel should be lightly oiled after every day of fishing, and it should

The secret of plug casting a shore line is getting the lure in close. If you never get caught you are not getting in close enough.



Spincasting has adapted the spinning reel principle to bait casting procedures. It is an improvement rather than a compromise.

be cleaned after every 5 or 6 days. The level wind should be lightly oiled after every hour of use.

The cast should ALWAYS be overhead—straight up and down. Sideswiping will only mark you as a dub and will, eventually, cost you a hospital bill to get your hooks out of your companion's face. The reel handles should always be turned up. In this position, the reel runs smoother, and your wrist is free to function properly in the cast. Learn to cast with "free spool," that is, with the "anti-backlash" devices turned off. The thumb is the only reliable controlling factor. Remember that the thumb should touch the lower spool flange — not the line — and it should ride there with some pressure at all times. At no time during the cast should your thumb lose contact with that spool.

Use a monofilament leader, tying it to your casting line with a Keys knot (see January 1958 issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE), and keep your nonessential, terminal hardware to a minimum. Tie your lures directly to the leader or line — unnecessary snaps and swivels will only rob your lures of their proper action.

Don't be ashamed of your old-fashioned plug casting gear. An expert plug caster, using similar lines and lures, will always cast father and, ordinarily, with more accuracy than the expert spin fisherman. He has, also, usually spent a whole lot more time practicing his trade.

Fly Casting

Here is a field of light tackle fishing that has more misunderstandings than a hound pup has tricks. Fly fishing is, in many respects, the high art of the sports fishing world. It offers the utmost in pleasure and satisfaction to the angler who pursues his sport in the classic manner.

Fly fishing is more than just a way to catch fish — it is a communion with nature, a study in patience, understanding, and awareness. The dedicated fly fisherman is not intent on a big bag of fish, he doesn't care about prizes in a fishing contest, he's not affected by fishing fads, and he doesn't need a lot of competing anglers to keep him happy. He has been called a snob, and he probably is one in a very inoffensive way. I wish there were many more like him.

The first big mistake lots of people make about fly fishing is in thinking they can't do it. Actually, fly casting is easy — much easier than plug casting. I have, on many occasions, demonstrated that the average person can learn to properly cast a fly for fishing distances of 30 to 40 feet in just a few minutes' time.

The big thing to remember in learning to fly cast is to never let the rod go back past your ear on the back cast. Ninety percent of all fly fishing trouble is caused by the rod going back too far.

The proper cast is to bring the rod up with a sharp sweep, stopping it cold at the ear. Get someone to check you on this as you try it, because you will unconsciously go back twice too far without knowing it.

At the ear, you pause to allow time for the 25 or 30 feet of fly line to travel to the rear and up. When the line finally straightens out, you will feel a slight rearward tug on the rod tip. This is the time to begin the forward cast. That's all there is to it. Bring the rod up sharply to the ear — pause — bring the rod sharply forward — the line will fly out as if by magic.

It helps a lot if you learn with a properly balanced fly outfit. Avoid big, heavy fly rods. A good average rod for Florida fishing should be made of glass, in two pieces, 8 or 8½ feet long, and weigh about 4½ ounces. The action should be "dry fly." This action is stiff in the butt and mid section and has a fast tip. Such a rod will cast popping bugs and streamers very well, using a level D or a GBF bug taper. It will, also, do very well with dry or wet flies and will serve as a salt water rod if the occasion demands.

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For average, fresh water fishing, I much prefer the automatic fly reel, because, with it, I can keep my line in the protection of the reel most of time instead of walking all over it in the bottom of the boat. I like tapered leaders, and I prefer to tie them myself. For most Florida fishing, I taper (using the Surgeon's Knot — see October 1957 issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE) my leaders 20, 15, 10, and 6 pound test. These will cast better and catch more fish than level leaders.

Don't be taken in by that old malarky about casting while holding a handkerchief between elbow and side. This is for the birds. Most expert fly rod men cast with a full arm movement, adding a flip of the wrist at the top of the cast. I, personally, use an 8-ft. rod, and my hand is usually as high or higher than my head as I cast. A good rule to follow is to cast in the manner most natural and easy for you. If this means holding your elbow tight against your ribs, by all means do so.

Most beginning fly fishermen try to cast too long a line. Thirty or forty feet is the ideal distance for most fly fishermen. At this distance, you can easly lift the whole line and lay it down again without false casting. It makes for effortless and accurate fishing. As a rule, 50 feet should be your extreme cast. More than that is generally not practical. Fish it slow, slow, and then slower.

I think popping bugs are the most fun to fish and are by far the most effective all-round fly rod lures. Streamers are almost as effective but not so much fun. The best bugs and streamers are the ones you dream up and tie yourself. Nothing beats the thrill of catching fish on a fly lure of your own creation.

Spinning

The advent of spinning in America caused more commotion than two dozen scared mice at a WCTU convention. It was first described as "crazy, upside-down, backwards, and left-handed foolishness." It could still be described the same way, except we now know there is very little foolishness about. It's a wonderful way to fish, and present day spinning tackle is a far cry from the first imports that turned up after the war. We have taken spinning to our hearts and molded it to our own conception of what we think it should be.

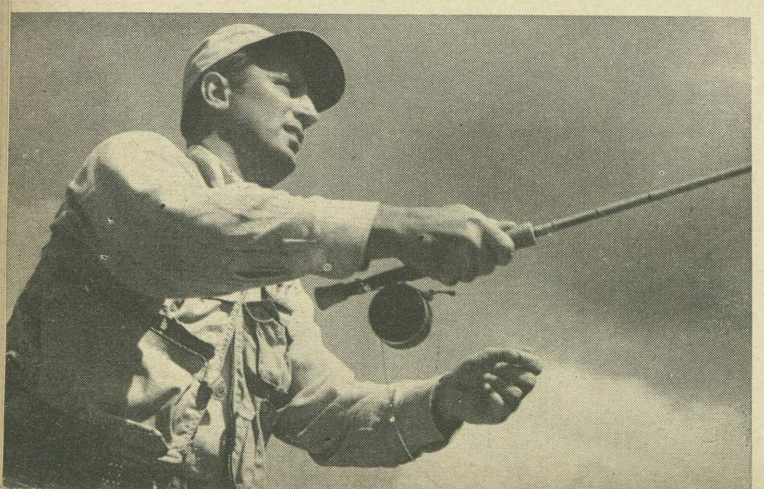
A quiet lake, lily pads, and big blue bream hitting popping bugs under a warm, summer sky. These are angling's multiple rewards.

All spinning reels have the fixed spool in common. It does not revolve. The line peels in spirals off the end of the spool. In general, there are two kinds of spinning reels — open and closed face. The open face reels have devices called pickup arms that put the line back on the spool by revolving around it. There are full bale, half arm, stud or manual. They all require manual operation. The operation of open face spinning reels makes their position in relation to your hand mandatory. They must hang directly under the hand and, as a rule, with two of your fingers on either side of the reel stand.

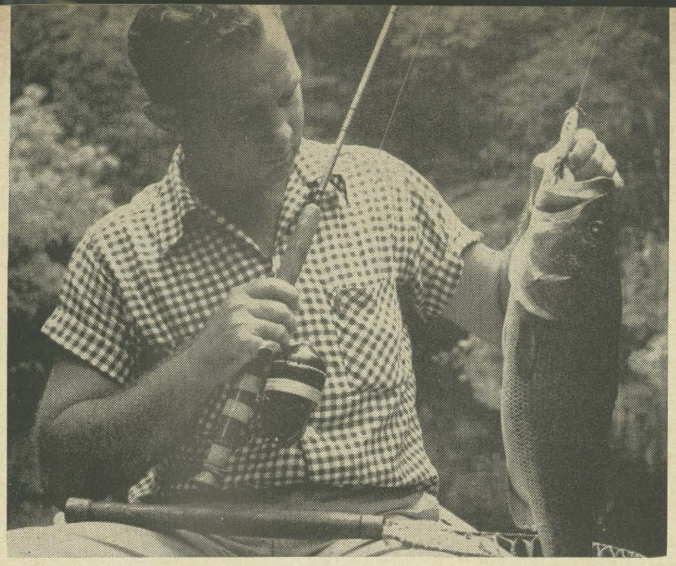
The closed face spinning reel, a strictly American innovation, operates on the same principle, except the spool and pickup mechanism are enclosed in a hood, with the operation of the reel made automatic. The reel fits on the rod behind the hand, much as a fly reel fits on a fly rod.

In my opinion, there is no comparison between these types of reels. The closed face reel is faster, simpler to operate, requires less maintenance, and gives better, all-round service. I can cast farther and with much greater accuracy using my closed face reels than I ever could with my open face models. The behind-the-hand mounting of the closed face reels produces a balanced spinning outfit that is much to be desired and much less fatiguing.

Open face reels (mounted as they must be, directly beneath the hand) produce a tip heavy, unbalanced outfit that is undesirable from this old fly fisherman's point of view. Some rod makers are now producing rods slugged with lead in the butts to overcome this tip heaviness, but most anglers are trying to avoid extra weight these days.



Fly fishing is easy and rewarding. Here is an expert in action, casting the easy, relaxed, natural way.



Upside down, backwards, and left-handed. That's spinning. Efficient, trouble free, and most effective would be a better description.

Uncontrolled line, peeling off an open face reel, is gathered by the first and largest guide on the spinning rod. Between reel and gathering guide, the fast moving spirals slap the rod in a rapid tatoo, sometimes hard enough to cut into the glass of the rod. Both line slap and gathering guides produce friction that impedes the cast. In closed face reels, the line peels off the spool but is immediately gathered and controlled inside the reel hood. The line leaves the hood aimed straight at the first guide, much as the line leaves a casting reel. Both of these methods produce line resistance, and the arguments go on and on as to which produces the most. The closed face reel gets my vote of approval on this score, too.

Spinning rods are almost all hollow glass, which, for this purpose, is by far the best. I like a light, 2-pc., 6½-ft. rod with a very fast tip. The cast with spinning tackle should be an exaggerated snap cast — very fast action, with the hand starting the forward cast while the tip is still traveling back. If you can master this quick flip of a snap cast, your spinning casting problems are over.

In salt water, I like 10-lb. mono, and in fresh water, I like 6. I like spinning tackle at all times in fresh water or salt. I have concentrated on two lures for spinning that are just about all I need. One is the famous Super-Duper, an underwater lure made in many sizes. I use it in 1/6, 1/4, and 3/8 ounce sizes, and I like the gold and chrome finishes. I have never found its equal as a reliable fish getter. For top water spinning, I use the Spin-I-Diddee plug. This is a ¼-oz. floating lure with spinners fore and aft. It comes in many colors, but I stick to Silver Flash (S), Florida Frog (FF), and Orlando Shiner (SH).

One of angling's brightest rewards is in introducing a boy to this fascinating sport. You may even get a helping hand.

Spincasting

This is the big, bawling baby of the fishing world. It was born out of the resistance of human nature to change. Anglers for years refused to take the time and trouble to learn to use plug casting outfits properly. They traveled along their stony path, beset by backlashes, dogged by poor casting and poorer results.

Along came spinning to show an easier, less troublesome way. Would our hero try this? Not on your life! Use an upside-down outfit? Not him! Learn to reel left-handed? Never! Our average hero stuck to his plug casting rod, but he was no longer satisfied to be a dub.

Casting a secret but envious eye on the spinning converts, the howls of dissatisfied bait casters rode the wild winds. One of these errant breezes fell on the ears of a company out west engaged in making practice bombs for the Air Force. With great and commendable foresight, this company produced the first Zebco Reel *(Zero Bomb Co.)*. Accurately gauging the public temper, the Zebco people converted the spinning reel principle to a closed face spinning reel as much like a casting reel as possible. Mounted on top of a bait casting rod, it was still necessary to change hands to wind in the lure. The pickup was semiautomatic. The rest is history. Today, spincasting is on top of the heap. There are now many different spincast reels on the market and many sizes to choose from. The best of these reels are trouble free, simple in design and operation.

Rods to fit spincast reels lagged far behind. All spincast rods had regular, bait casting handles which placed the new reels too high and too far back for comfortable operation and control. This year, the South Bend Tackle Company brought out a line of rods with a handle they call "Master-Grip." These rods, for the first time offer the same comfortable feel with spincast reels that formerly was possible only with fine, well-balanced bait casting outfits.

I have two spincast outfits. One is light with 6-lb. line. The other is a medium weight rig with 10-lb. line. I love them both. I am using the new "Master-Grip" handles and feel right at home with them. The fast,

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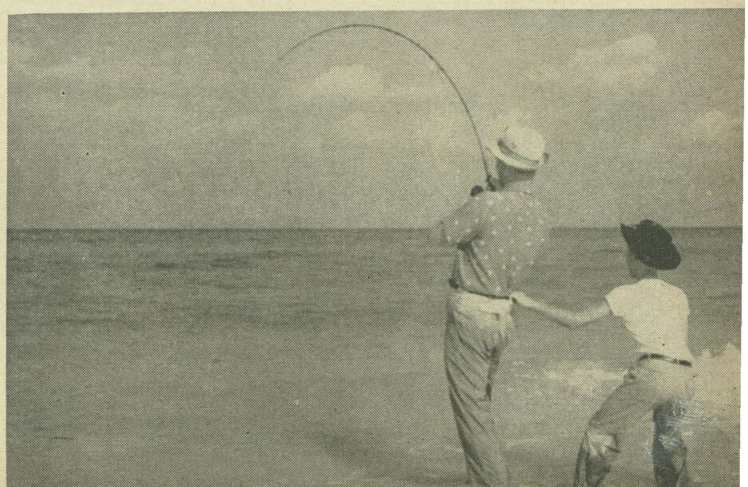


Photo by Jake Johnson

Woods fires could destroy stream bank vegetation and adversely affect the fish population in that particular body of water.

FORESTRY and FISHING

By JOHN DANAHY, JR.

Florida Forestry Service

Beautiful, well-timbered waterways have great aesthetic value. Vegetation holds the soil in place, builds up a humus sponge which is a natural water regulator.

MUDDY STREAMS AND LAKES, and fire gutted timber are serious enemies to the fish population in parts of our state. A soil erosion problem, because of forest wildfires, can greatly affect sport fishing. Fishing and wildfires, at first glance do not seem suited as peas in the same pod.

Mention must first be made of the parts of Florida subject to soil erosion. In general, soil extending in areas from around Pensacola to Tallahassee are most affected. There is also a narrow North-South strip extending down the middle of the state from Starke to Sebring.

Sport fishermen in these areas will recognize that this touches some rather choice inland fishing lakes and streams. True, this is only a small part of the total area of Florida. But it is also true that our state is a fish haven, and a paradise for the fisherman the year 'round.

Erosion is a very real problem to the fisherman after a wildfire. Because most of our state is flat and sandy, the problem of erosion might easily be overlooked. That it is entirely possible, cannot be doubted. However, it is more pertinent at this time to discuss the prevention of soil erosion rather than what has happened or could happen in the future.

Geological surveys of our state show in the affected western and peninsular areas to have a soil composed of a mixture of clay, gravel and sand. The rest of the state is made up chiefly of sand, limestone, coquina and lesser amounts of clay. Soil erosion is not as serious a problem in the more sandy areas.

The distinct possibility of erosion affecting fishing in this state arises in part because of the serious wildfire situation that does exist. The fishing in numerous states that have heavy amounts of top soil on an irregular topography would be facing a grave conservation disaster if they had their forests racked with

Florida's rate of fire occurrence.

The forest is a natural guardian of the fish population. Brothers in Nature, the tree and the fish work for each other, very satisfactorily. Concentrated work toward forest management has a healthy effect in water and wildlife conservation. A few of these benefits are to provide food and shelter to the forest game and wildlife, and to form the natural boundaries and reservoir for a sufficient water supply.

In the forest a sponge has been supplied to trap some of the rain water. The leaves and needles from branches of the various trees fall during the year on the floor of the forest. In time, these decay and form a thick layer of humus, Nature's sponge. Like any sponge, it will hold a great deal of water and gradually allow it to pass into a reservoir below the surface.

The reservoir is the soil, where water is stored between the particles. When needed, this water is used by trees and other vegetation, and also to supply the plant life with moisture over a dry period. Some of this water forms the streams and rivers as "leaks" in Nature's enormous reservoir.

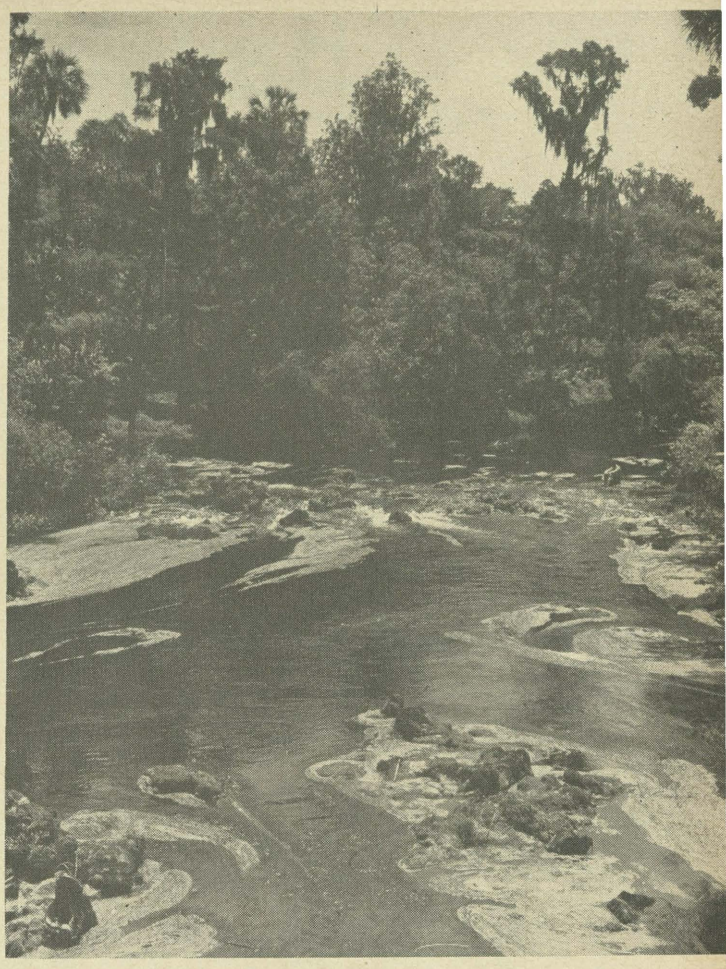
If the rain runs off the surface of the soil and does not soak in, then the reservoir gradually diminishes, streams fill too fast and tend to overflow their banks, or fill with silt and become muddy. This covers or washes away the food for the fish and eventually fishing in this water is poor or stops because of periods of drought, flood, or lack of food.

Such occurs when the humus is destroyed by a wildfire. Even if the trees do not die, it takes a long time to build another natural humus sponge. Wildlife suffer because food and shelter, once provided by the forest, have been destroyed. Soon the game is gone, the fish are gone, and good timber terribly wasted.

Well managed forests will benefit those making a living from the forest, the fisherman and hunter and Mother Nature when protection against the dreaded forest fire is present. In Florida this is provided in most counties by the Florida Forest Service Fire Control crews. In many of the same or other counties the additional services of the Farm Forester is available without charge to the landowners to assist him in his forest management and marketing problems.

So, in wooded country, what you do to the forest affects your favorite outdoor sport. With good forestry practices we have good fishing; but, poor forestry means poor fishing. No one ever wins in a wildfire. It hurts the industry, it hurts the forest economy, and it sets back conservation so far, that only Nature can repair the damage in her slow, unhurried way. The successful prevention of forest fires in these areas of the state specifically mentioned, will assure good fishing by prevention of serious soil erosion.

If it weren't necessary for man to depend on the earth for sustenance, and wealth, Nature itself would take care of her own very well. However, man must till the soil and fish the waters for his own survival. Therefore, he must repay these natural elements by a knowledge of its laws thru intelligent use of Nature's gifts. This will allow the replenishing and restocking of the soil and water with new life.



Banks of fast flowing streams are more subject to erosion than those of slower moving rivers and lakes. Because of soil structure, erosion is a threat mainly in northwest Florida and in a narrow mid-state strip from Starke to Sebring.

As citizens, tax payers, employers or employees, we are the instruments which shape the destiny of our great resources to fruitful use or tragic waste. The relationship of the four areas of conservation—water, soil, forest, and wildlife—is so intimate that benefits or deterrents to the needs of conservation are felt throughout Nature. In addition to the skill possessed by a good fisherman, he has an appreciation for protecting fishing interests. He observes and obeys the fish and game laws, and the fire laws too. All fishermen can have a hand in being certain that the big ones will still be bitin' the next time thru intelligent use of fire and by being a "good sport" in the rules of good fishing. ●

Bass Fishing From A to Z

Dalton Anderson beams over a Mile Lake largemouth taken on a popping bug.

There's no question about it. All bass fishermen are experts.

By ERNIE LYONS

TROUBLE IS EVERY bass fisherman knows everything there is to know about bass fishing from A to Z.

My own affliction with the art started because I liked to throw things. Like most small boys I would toss anything that wasn't nailed down and could be picked up: pine cones, sticks, box turtles, live harmless snakes, dead harmful snakes — and one wonderful afternoon I heaved a leopard frog out into Craig's Pond.

There was no malice in the act. I merely wanted to see if frogs could swim. They can. In fact, that one made it back to within five feet of the grassy shoreline when a hungry bass pounced on him like a lion collecting the last martyr of the season.

I caught that bass with another frog, a big safety pin that was supposed to hold my pants to my shirt, and about thirty feet of string I was carrying in a pocket. He wasn't much as bass go—maybe a pound and a half—but I ran all the way home with him still flopping. Mother fried him for my supper that night and I ate him all the way down to his last crisp fin.

So when my own boy was in the third grade and came running home late one afternoon, out of breath, to blurt: "I threw a frog in the school pond and you know what—" I interrupted him. "I know what," I said. "The hooks are in the top compartment of the tackle box on the pack porch." As the back door slammed, I turned to my wife and said "I don't know what's the matter with boys anymore. They don't carry anything in their pockets these days. Have the grease hot in about an hour."

"You mean we're going to have fish for supper again tonight?"

"We aren't. He is. The world is just about to gain another authority on bass fishing from A to Z. Next it will be grasshoppers. Then pork rinds. Then plugs, spoons, spinners, artificial eels, bugs, flies and even weird contraptions he will whittle out himself—and at every stage he will know everything there is to know about bass fishing.

"I don't understand," she said.

And no one else does.

It is an indisputable fact that, although methods change as the years roll by, and bass fishermen graduate from one way of doing to another, at no phase of their evolution are they ever anything but experts.

Old man R. R. Roebuck was an expert. He stunned his from a crude stand nailed between cypresses on the edge of a red-water pond . . . and the sun had to be just right, the bullet had to go just so, and you were a fool to waste it on anything less than an eight-pounder, because a rifle cartridge was worth a deer or a turkey and you had to be mighty fish-hungry to use one on anything that wasn't red meat.

Old man Pendarvis was an expert. He considered shooting fish a downright hoggish, unfair and mean thing and knocked down all the shooting stands he could find. His own method was to chop down a bush, inch along behind it to the creek bank and kneel in frozen immobility until the proper bass came along—when he would throw his spear straight and true. He never missed.

Old Man Cleveland had the greatest contempt for both of them. He was a real bass fisherman. He would scout the clear pools of the upper South Fork until he found a hole where some old lunker lolled indiffer-

ently down under a mass of sunken palmetto logs. He would feign indifference, too, and stroll on off a few hundred feet to where his cane pole and bucket of live bream were stashed. He'd light his pipe, let half an hour pass for the bass to forget there was a man around . . . and then you never saw an Indian more slippery, sly and silent than Old Man Cleveland sneaking back. As he neared the pool, he went down on hands and knees, then down on his belly, pushing the pole along just above the ground, cupping the wiggling bream in his hand, deftly tossing it in so that it seemed to come from nowhere, sunfishing under the cork . . . A dark shape, jut-jawed, intent, came up from the snags to engulf it, went down again—and Old Man Cleveland rose to heave a ten-pounder out onto the palmettos by chalk-line, stout cane pole and sheer, brute strength.

Each of them, long gone with a Florida of pioneer practicality that has vanished, was an expert after his own fashion, knowing how to catch bass from A to Z.

No one condones the rough and rugged methods of Florida's early-days fishermen. I cite them to illustrate only one point, but to my mind the most important single thing about bass fishing then or now: to consistently catch really good bass you must be a master of deception.

If black bass were entirely creatures of instinct, automatically responding to certain stimuli, it would be no problem at all to catch them consistently on any waters. The fact is that most anglers appear to subscribe to that theory, casting the shoreline of a stream or the padded rim of a lake with mathematical precision, shooting their casts in to the shore every six or eight feet, reeling rapidly or popping slowly and, in the course of a day—to the mutual surprise of both, I am sure—landing four or five bass "if conditions are right."

Once in a blue moon the plug or the bug lands in front of the nose of a worthwhile fish, and the angler joins the ranks of those who know everything about bass fishing from A to Z.

But I wonder. The black bass is a rugged individualist. A good-sized one has spent a large part of his life evading danger in many forms. He is a creature of convictions. He believes. He makes decisions and he acts. In my personal opinion, we Florida fishermen for the most part don't give our bass credit for the intelligence they have. Because there is such an abundance of bass in our lakes, streams and canals, a good many of us have become loose and sloppy in our fishing.

A man from Missouri taught me that skill brings the big pay-off even in hard-fished waters — and I found that his same methods, used in South Florida, will turn "bad days" into good ones.

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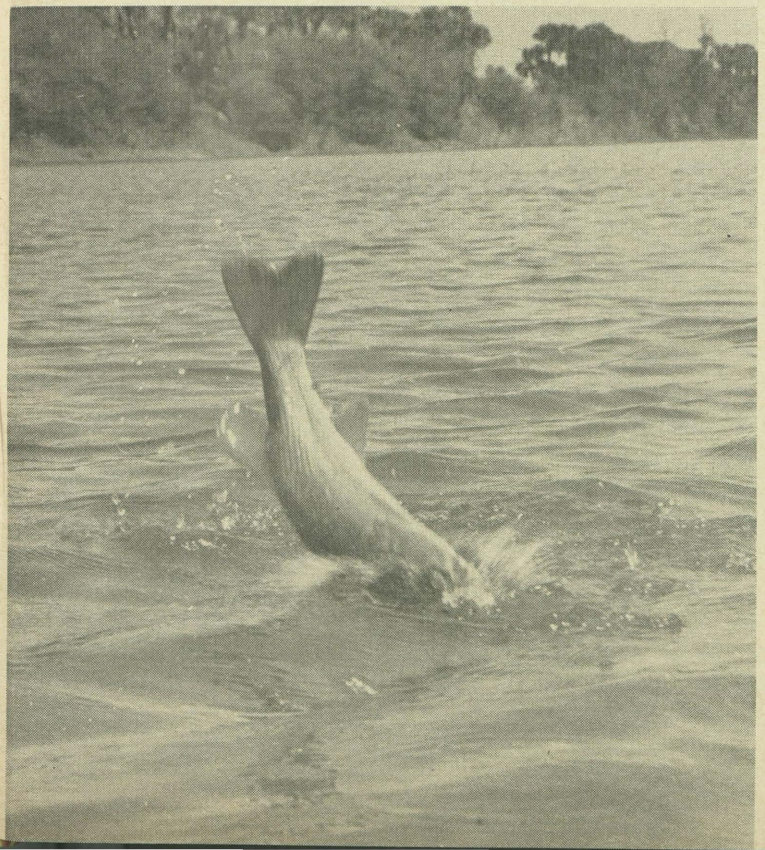
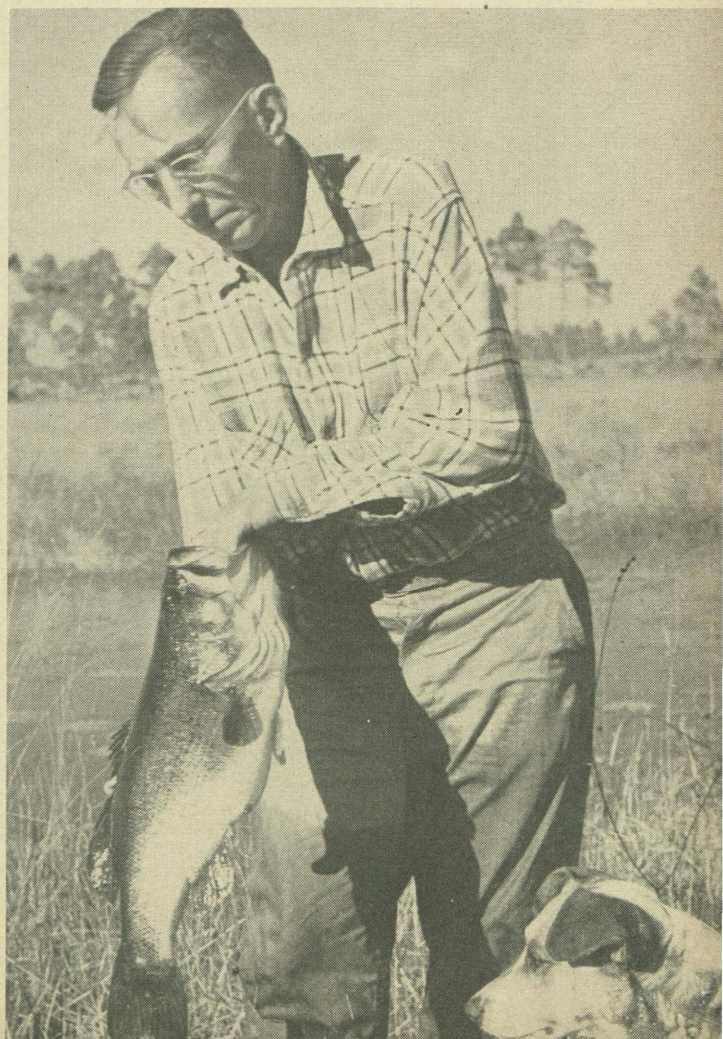
A hook-stung Florida largemouth tries aerial tactics to throw the lure. The fish dashed into the bullrushes, came out again and ended up on author Ernest Lyons' stringer. The bass tipped the beam at 7-pounds.





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He was "Mac" McKibben, my guide on a test-trip to try out the then "new and startling" Wilder-Dilg feathered minnow, a granddaddy of our modern bass bugs. We were fishing the Black River headwaters in the Ozarks in the fall of the year when the stream was low and crystal clear. We would walk down on blue pools against rocky bends and those holes were loaded with smallmouths. I could see them as clearly as if they were in an aquarium and although I cast feathered minnows at them until I was blue in the face, I got nary a strike. "Guess these things are no good," I told "Mac" in disgust.

"They're O.K. but you keep showing yourself," he said. "The bass can see you as good as you can see them."

I handed the rod and the lures to him and on the next four holes I watched "Mac" put on a good imitation of those early day Florida Crackers who stalked their big bass.

He crawled across gravel bars on his hands and knees, kept his rod low, sought the cover of stumps and log jams, cast sidewise — and collected a good fish from each pool.

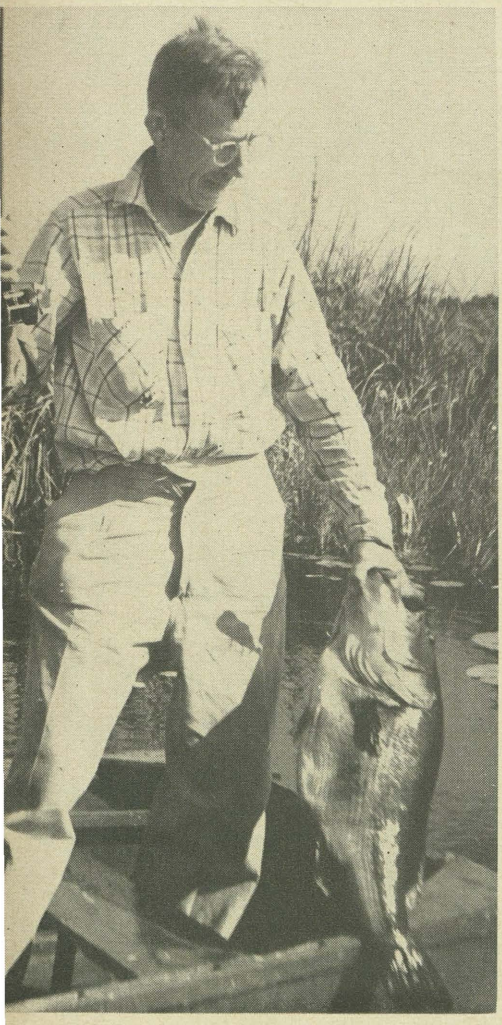
The ultimate in black bass fishing is the highest degree of deception achieved by the angler against the smartest possible bass.

As more and more anglers invade Florida waters — some of them so "boat-crazy" that they roar through good fishing spots on hitherto quiet streams—the successful bass fisherman is going to have to be more careful, more skillful and is going to have to adopt the same rules that still produce good fishing in heavily fished northern waters.

To me, this means getting up before daylight and being on the fishing grounds at dawn, after the bass have had an undisturbed night. It means careful and selective fishing in which you use your "know-how" to the utmost, instead of blind "bank casting." It means easing up on quiet pools, being still and self-effacing, studying the lay-out before you make your cast and working one cast to the utmost, rather than whipping a pool to a froth.

Let the bug or plug lie motionless for 20 to 30 seconds after it hits. In close quarters in only partially murky water it is sometimes possible to see a couple of feet below the surface—and to note a dark shadow hovering below. A really good bass is watching, thinking, deciding. Be still. If you twitch the bug at all, give it the slightest of twitches, just enough to make it shiver like a dying insect.

A wise bass, making up his mind, is less apt to charge than to slowly rise and engulf the lure. He's coming up. He *believes!* Your heart pounds but you stay still until the instant that he "kisses it down" and then you strike quickly before he spits it out.



The stuff of which anglers' dreams are made. Ernest Lyons with 14-pound largemouth taken on the Jensen Savannas.

That, to my mind, is the ultimate in bass fishing.

Stealth, quiet, skill are now needed to get good bass from small places, like the upper South Fork of the St. Lucie River, and the same methods will work on any other Florida stream.

Try long casts, long waits, if you're after lunkers in larger bodies of waters, such as Blue Cypress or the central Florida lakes. If you're casting a crippled minnow or plunker type of plug, try letting it lie still for as long as *one minute.* Remember, one minute is a long, long, time—but the boys who are used to getting the big ones don't mind waiting for them to make up their minds.

On a cold day, when nothing seems to be hitting, try going down deep with salt water jigs or other weighted lures in the very centers of the lakes or the deepest holes in the streams. The water is warmer in the depths and you are not apt to find many bass in the shallows if a cold snap hit the night before.

Paradoxically, this also works in the hottest days of summer. One blazing July morning, I cast all around the shores of Mile Lake without a rise. At high noon, just before quitting in disgust, I sailed one of those floaters with frog skin stretched over it out into the center of the lake—and in seven successive casts caught eight bass. The last cast was a double-header, with an eight-pounder and a two-pounder latched on to the lure.

That's worth remembering when you can't raise them along the shore.

A word about tackle. If you're fishing the bonnets or heavy lily-pads with a weedless spoon, don't kid yourself by using a super-light line. Fit your line to the situation, which is that the bass is bound to tangle around the lily stems and break light rigging. Allow him to tangle, don't try to horse him, but work yourself over his way and reach down until you can get your hand in his jaw.

The popularity of monofilament has led to some foolishness among "parlor bass fishermen," who brag

(Continued on Page 41)

AROUND THE STATE

Photo by Wallace Hughes

During last October's heavy rains flood waters of the Ochlockonee River breached the Jackson Bluff dam, draining popular Lake Talquin. Sportsmen in the Tallahassee-Quincy area feared Talquin's excellent fishing would be a thing of the past. G&FWFC Fisheries Technicians spot checked remaining waters, found abundance of gar and other non-game fish as well as excellent population of crappie, shellcrackers, bass and other game species. Sufficient numbers of game fish survived to rapidly repopulate the lake when the repaired dam restores water levels.

Photo by Dave Webb

The Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area in Charlotte County was the scene recently of the Southeastern States Field Trials. Pointers taking top honors in the events were Newman's Delivery Dan (Ernie Newman, Sumter, S.C.) and Brownair Tommy (Frank Oosterhoudt, Lake City, Fla.)

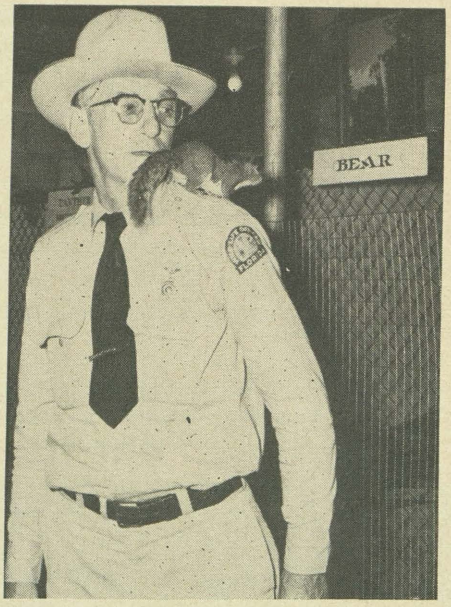


Photo by Dave Webb

W/O John Hardin kept his eye on Squeeky, the gray squirrel, who kept two wide eyes on a Florida black bear, who was taking life easy during the DeSoto County Fair, Arcadia, Fla. Squeeky and the bear were part of the native animals displayed at fair's Wildlife Education Exhibit.

THE WINGED MENACE

By DAREL McCONKEY
U. S. Department of Agriculture

THE SCREWWORM will be eradicated in Florida and the Southeast because of what it is and what it does.

It is a parasite of warm-blooded animals and feeds only on living flesh. It lacks the dignity of a buzzard or a blowfly, which serve a purpose in disposing of dead flesh. The fly does not bite, but the maggot flourishes by feeding on wounds made by other means.

The female screwworm fly, ready to lay her eggs, wings through woodlands and pastures seeking an open wound, large as a barbed-wire slash or small as a tick-bite. In the meantime, she sips the nectar of flowers, drinks droplets of rain or dew, feeds on the fluid in wounds and the liquid in decaying carcasses and deposits her eggs. She is an indefatigable inspector of livestock and wildlife, examining bodies hundreds or thousands of times the size of her own, always looking for the weak spot, a break in the skin.

Her search is by no means fruitless. There are scores of ways for animals to be injured. They can be snagged, scratched, or pricked in woodlands and swamps. They can be bitten by flies or ticks. They can be gored, scored, or grazed by horns or antlers in mating season. Deer that have shed their antlers rub their heads against trees until the blood oozes. Infant animals with unhealed navels are very susceptible to screwworm attack in calving, farrowing, or fawning season. Birth wounds in female animals are another point of entry for these voracious insects. Gunshot wounds are also frequently infested.

Eggs of the screwworm fly hatch into larvae that feed on the living flesh of the warm-blooded animal host and eventually kill the untreated animal.

Domestic animals are subject to screwworm infestation when they are dehorned, branded, earmarked, eartagged, castrated, lacerated by catch dogs, scratched on carelessly built pens, chutes, or fences. Unless animals are handled or driven quietly they may panic and injure themselves in a dozen different ways.

The female screwworm fly has no great difficulty in finding a break in the skin of some animal around which to lay her eggs. When she finds it, the urge to to oviposit becomes overpowering. She lays a shingled mass of about 200 pure white eggs, usually in the edges of the wound.

Within a day, before the wound has had time to heal, the eggs have hatched in a grayish downy mass of tiny larvae. They crawl into the wound head first and begin to feed on the living flesh. As blood and serum ooze out they continue to eat, standing on their heads and breathing through their tails. Two hundred of them can make a pouch of infestation the size of a lemon. Now the wound is even more attractive to female flies. They may come by dozens and lay their white egg masses around the edges of the enlarged wound. These pure white egg masses make the wound distinctive and easy to identify. Unless treated, the wound enlarges to the size of an orange, may become as large as a grapefruit, as hundreds and even thousand of screwworm maggots bore into it. A full-grown steer can die of such an infestation within 10 days.

In a week or less, maggots of the original brood grow to their full size, about half an inch. They crawl out of the wound, drop to the ground, and burrow into it. They change into the pupal or resting stage and spend about a week underground. Then the young fly pops open the pupal case, emerges from the ground, and crawls up on a bush or grass-blade to stretch its wings and harden its body. In an hour or two it is ready to take flight. In 2 days it is old enough to mate. Females mate only once, no matter how many males besiege them. Males may mate as many as 17 times if they can find enough receptive females. On the average they mate only once, however for the ratio of males to females is about equal. Females are ready to lay eggs when they are 5 days old. In weather favorable to the pest, it takes only about 3 weeks from egg to egg, from one generation to another.

Great prolificacy and persistence makes the screwworm the expensive pest it is. Losses of livestock, maiming and stunting of animals, and the expense of treating screwworm infestations — which can be readily cured—run to about $10 million a year in Florida and to more than $20 million in the Southeast. This damage is to domestic livestock alone; no one has ever attempted to compute the damage to wildlife.

Screwworm infestation of domestic animals can be treated and kept under control by riding herd on animals, treating them by approved methods, and

keeping them confined for additional treatment when needed. Nobody inspects neglected animals ranging the woods and swamps. Nobody can inspect wild animals attacked by this flesh-eating pest. Already shy and retiring creatures, they become more so when the maggots start to eat on them. They cannot be found, caught, and treated. They can only die from screwworm assault. And they serve as a reservoir of infestation for other animals.

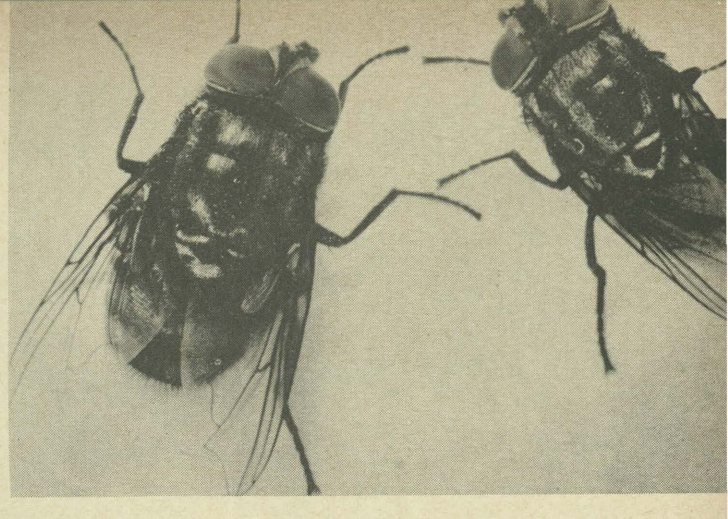
Screwworms can attack any warm-blooded animal, regardless of size. They do not attack the cold-blooded creatures — snakes, turtles, frogs, alligators. Small birds and animals, even though attacked, do little to spread the pest. They die so quickly from the infestation that the maggots are too immature to pupate and the maggots die with them.

Rabbits, skunks, opossums, raccoons, bears, and deer are large enough to support screwworm infestation until the larvae are ready to leave the wound, burrow into the ground, pupate, and carry on the life of the species.

Florida and the Southeast have lived through a serious and hard-working attempt to rid livestock of screwworm by control methods. The pest first appeared in the Southeast in 1933, in the vicinity of Boston, Ga. Before the year was out, it had spread to 50 counties in southern Georgia and northern Florida. Unfortunately, the winter of 1933-34 was not sufficiently severe to freeze out the initial infestation. Before the end of 1934, the pest had spread all over Florida, and was entrenched in South Florida. In this bland climate the screwworm could remain active the year round and spread northward each summer.

In 1935 the U. S. Department of Agriculture joined the southern States in an Education and Control Program aimed to reduce screwworm depredations. During the first 7 months of this program, June through December 1935, there were an average of 22,000 reported cases a month, and more than 5,000 animals were killed by screwworms.

The program used a three-pronged approach — how to recognize screwworm infestation, how to treat screwworm cases, and how to prevent infestation. The lesson of recognition was so well taught that it has become a matter of routine for southern livestock owners who regularly inspect their animals. The method of treatment was crude by today's standards — with benzol and pine tar oil — but the recommendation to confine infested animals in hopsital pens and continue treatment until they have recovered is as good now as it was 20 years ago. Methods of preventing screwworm cases are also still applicable: Breed for early calving in the more northerly parts of the infested area; treat the navels of newborn animals; handle all animals gently to prevent injury; make sure that no nails or splinters protrude from gates, pens, and chutes; dehorn calves while they are small and tip the horns of larger animals; use the bloodless



The screwworm fly is bluish in color and about three times the size of a housefly. The female lays about 200 eggs on the edges of cuts or wounds.

emasculator for castration of cattle, sheep, and goats; and treat animals to control Gulf Coast ticks.

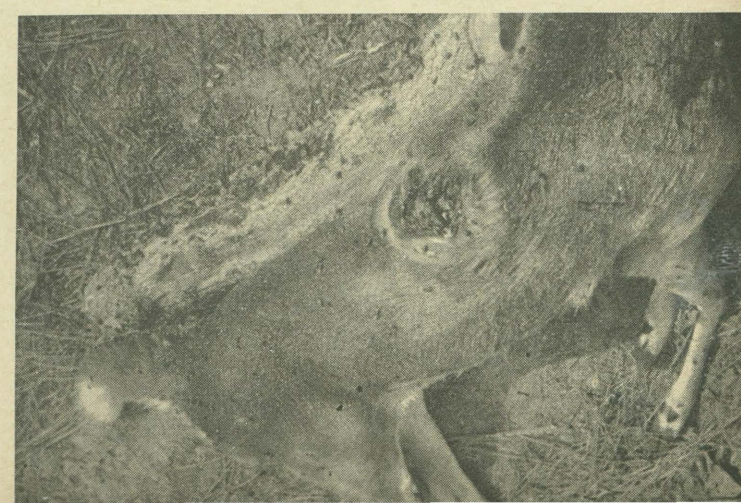
The program was so effective that, by the spring of 1938, incidence of screwworm had been reduced to 40 cases a month and no reported deaths of livestock. But, although the control program reduced the incidence of screwworms, the problem remained because of the reservoir of investation in wildlife and neglected domestic animals.

Since then, pets, livestock, and wildlife have had good years and bad years with the screwworm. A good year for the screwworm is a bad year of the animals. The pest thrives in the warmth of subtropics where citrus can be grown. A mild winter enables it to survive farther north, a severe winter freezes it back to the south. But in summer it moves north again, spreading by its own wing power as much as 5 miles a day, 35 miles a week.

The winter of 1955-56 was a mild one enabling the insect to overwinter in southern Georgia, whereas on the average it seldom overwinters far north of Gainesville. As a result, animals were in for a bad year all during 1956.

(Continued on Page 43)

The screwworm is a serious threat to Florida's deer herds although it is obviously impossible to accurately determine the parasite's annual toll of deer and other wildlife.



WILDLIFE Source of Much Weather Lore

By JAY CASEY

EVEN THOUGH, according to the Proverb, "To talk of the weather, it's nothing but folly, for when it rains on the hill, it shines in the valley," *Weather* is a favorite subject, and discussed by all classes of people.

When our great country was being settled the majority of the inhabitants lived on farms. Since their livelihood was chiefly dependent on their crops, and crops depended entirely on the weather, the farmers' greatest concern was *weather.*

In those days when there were neither weather-predicting firms, rain-makers, storm-hunters, nor official weather bureaus, men developed, without the aid of maps adorned with millibars, wind arrows and other curlicues, their own homely system of forecasting the coming weather.

In addition to reading signs seen in the sun, the moon, the clouds, rainbows, dew, wind and oceans, the early settlers gained much of their weather-wisdom from the Indians. They made their predictions by watching the conduct of animals, birds, insects, fish and reptiles, as well as unusual habits of various plants.

Practically everyone was a weather observer, and each community had a more-than-fair weather seer. In different locales different animals were employed in making the forecasts. One person might make predications because of the actions of certain animals or birds, while another would be guided by unusual behavior of fish, insects, or the way a certain plant grew. For this reason a wide variety of wildlife has played important roles in weather calculations.

Despite the cynicism of modern forecasters, who do not set store by the unusual actions of animals, they do agree, however, that in all probability animals do feel some change in barometric pressure in advance, and do behave differently before weather changes.

It was only natural that the men, who were so closely associated with both wild and domesticated animals, worked out their own formulae for predicting the seasons with foundation on the "birds and bees, animals and trees."

It is true that some of the early beliefs seem fantastic now, and some are balanced somewhat between truth and fable. But whether scientific or otherwise, old-timers, knowing the ancient signs, can frequently forecast the coming weather with uncanny accuracy.

It is always interesting to observe animals, and equally as interesting to recall some of the early beliefs or "signs" in predicting weather changes, such as:

Stormy Weather, accompanied with strong winds was expected when: Pigs ran around with sticks in their mouths; rabbits left open fields and fled to thickets; birds ceased their mid-day songs and emitted chirping sounds; horses chased one another around in the lots; foxes barked at night; the house cat reclined on its side with head erect, and aspen leaves trembled when there was not the slightest breeze.

According to old adages, "When the peacock loudly bawls, soon we'll have both rain and squalls"; and "A deep, clear sky of fleckless blue, breeds storms within a day or two."

The Seminole Indians predicted a hurricane would soon appear when the saw grass of the Everglades flowered.

About one hundred years ago Nowack's weather plant, a species of pea, gained favorable attention. It was claimed that, not only could this plant foretell stormy weather, but it predicted earthquakes as well.

"The West wind always brings wet weather; the East wind wet and cold together. The South wind surely brings us rain, the North wind blows it back again," was a jingle used by our ancestors in forecasting rain. Other old adages were: "When grass is dry at morning light, look for rain before the night." "A round-topped cloud with flattened base, carries rainfall in its face." "Puss on the hearth with velvet paws, sits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws; 't will surely rain, I see with sorrow our jaunt must be put off tomorrow." "When clouds appear like rocks and towers, the earth's refreshed by frequent showers."

Rainy weather was not far away, even though no clouds were visible, when: The pimpernel, called the "poor man's weather glass," closed its leaves; roosters crowed at nightfall; snails came out in the early morning; fish jumped high out of the water; cattle tried to scratch their ears and pawed up the ground; horses pointed their noses skyward and sniffed at the air; cats sneezed and scratched the table legs; dogs refused meat and ate grass; tree frogs sang, and flies were especially vicious.

The sun drawing water is a phe-

nomenon many people once regarded as a sign of rain. When the sun went behind a bank of clouds on Sunday night, rain would be expected before mid-night Wednesday.

When rain came, then ceased, the observer could tell if more rain was coming by this method—if raindrops clung to branches and wire, more rain was in prospect, or they knew that "Three days' rain will empty the sky," and "Rain before seven, shine before eleven!"

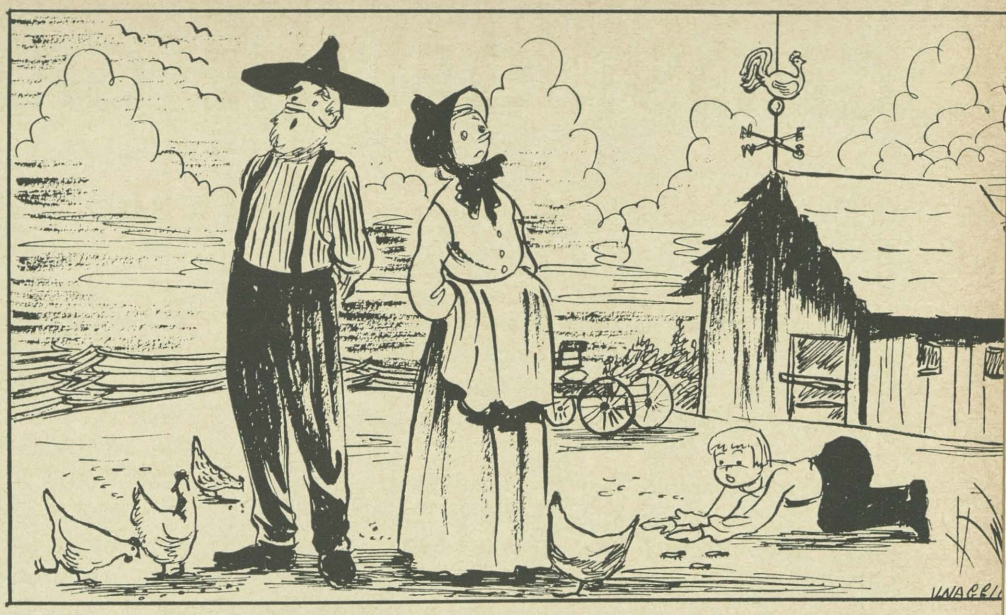
Thunder Storms were expected when: Cats snored; moles dug numerous tunnels; cranes flew high, and swallows flew low; bees remained near their hives instead of seeking nectar, and raincrows were heard during the day, and shed skins of snakes were seen hanging from trees.

"Plenty of thunder makes sugar in the cane," was another ancient belief, so electrical storms were welcomed in the sugar-cane country.

"Last night, the sun went pale to bed, the moon in halo hid her head," was a reliable indication of coming bad weather. "When the wind is in the east, it's good for neither man nor beast. When wind is in the north, the old folk should not venture forth. When the wind is in the south, it blows the bait in the fishes' mouth. When the wind is in the west, it is of all the winds the best," is another bit of folklore.

A quick change in weather, from GOOD to *BAD,* was anticipated if: One crow was seen flying alone; seagulls were sitting on the beach instead of flying over water; a rooster turned his tail toward the door and crowed; petrels flew near a ship, and a dog rolled over and remained upon his back.

Fair Weather was in prospect "If wooly fleeces spread the heavenly way, no rain, be sure, disturbs the summer day," or if: Cats slept peacefully, stretched out full length; bats made fluttering sounds with their wings when taking off on night flights; spiders made extra large webs, and houseflies were especially active toward sunset.



Fishermen first named certain cloud formations "mackerel sky," which was the herald of fair weather and a good catch, and doubtless responsible for "Mackerel sky, mackerel sky—never long wet, never long dry."

And then we have the well-known proverbs of, "An evening red and a morning gray is a sign of a fair day," and "Evening red, morning gray, sets the traveler on his way; evening gray, morning red, keeps the traveler in bed." "Rainbow in the morning, shepherds take warning; rainbow at night, shepherds delight," and "Rainbow to windward, foul fall the day; rainbow to leeward, damp runs away," are proverbs of rainbow weather lore.

Dry Weather was forecast when: Mud-wasps built their nests low on walls; rabbits played in open places; doves sang in early morning hours, and quails remained in flocks instead of pairing off.

Some prophets said that a halo around the sun meant a dry spell, while the moon's halo naturally portended rain. You could even tell the exact date of the expected rain by counting the number of stars within the halo, calling each star a day.

The way to stop a drouth was to kill a snake and hang it, belly up, on fence or limb of tree. Another old-time belief was "Rain follows the plow," so in many instances plowing was done when not actually needed, but merely to bring on rain!

Early Winter was in the offing when: Wild ducks and geese were seen flying at night; pigs grunted and nested together; field larks suddenly gathered in flocks; a robin entered a dwelling house, and prairie chickens left open areas for protected ones.

The *date the first frost* was expected was easy to figure—all one had to do was to count exactly forty days from the time the first chirp of the katydid was heard.

Mild Winter could be expected when: Muskrats built their homes low; Monarch butterflies were slow about going South; the flight of the white owls did not take place until late in the season; leaves were late about falling from trees, and insects chirped long and loud.

True the modern weatherman, with his typical scientific bluntness, debunks the theories that through the ages have come down to us in the form of proverbs, jingles, folklore and superstitions, but many examples of these quaint, but pleasing notions are found in America's most popular literature.

The Bible, as recorded at Matthew XVI, 2-3 says: "When it is

(Continued on Page 46)

GHOST OF THE GRAVEL PITS

By GEORGE X. SAND

"—and so, whatever 'twas—man, beast or devil—that was the last time anyone seen it. The next day they looked fer tracks where it had run back inter the woods. They found nothin', of course—not even a broken twig!"

No one spoke as old Tim, the head guide, finished his story. In the black night outside a restless wind moaned softly through the crowding pines, sending small eddies of powdered snow whispering away over the frozen ground; imparting lifeless motion to the shaggy coats of the half dozen horned bodies that hung stiffly from a limb behind the wood shed.

Then, abruptly, the tension was broken. A dying log collapsed inside the big fireplace. The little geyser of amber sparks silhouetted the old guide's thoughtful face as he turned and knocked out his cold pipe loudly against the hearth. At the far end of the rough board dinner table a big hunter stirred self-consciously. Several others began to chuckle.

I would have added my own comments to the swelling conversation, had I not caught a quick glimpse of Gruder, the camp cook.

Unnoticed, the lankey pine-hunkey had crept up to the outer edge of the fire light. He'd hovered there, nervously twisting his soiled apron, drinking in every word. But then, as the men began to voice their joking skepticism for Tim's story, an animal-like expression of dislike had sharpened the cook's hollow features, and he'd stalked sullenly back into the kitchen.

Puzzled, I began slowly to refill my pipe. In that fleeting instant my glance had clashed with something sinister, something distasteful in the wide, staring eyes that should have disappeared with a forgotten era of witchcraft.

I chided myself. Old Tim's strange story, the flickering shadows cast by the dying fire, the restless moan of the wind outside—all were ideally suited for establishing a werewolf mood of mystery in a mind and body weary after a hard day of tramping through the deer woods.

Still, as the others arose one by one to stretch and file out into the frosty night, enroute to the bunkhouse across the dark clearing, I remained seated by the fire; smoking, listening—waiting, for I knew not what.

Tim and the cook were in the kitchen. I could hear the murmur of their conversation.

I was about to turn in myself when suddenly Gruder's sharp voice reached me clearly, passionately:

"But I *seen* it, I tellyuh!"

"You saw *what?*" I asked quietly from the doorway.

The two men swung about. It was Tim who answered. "He sez it was the Georgia Devil I was tellin' you folks about."

I stared at Gruder. Distorted shadows in the man's eyes challenged me.

Having hunted the Georgia deer country for a number of years, I had of course grown accustomed to the superstitious, almost sullen, manner of the natives who live in the outlying pine barrens; I'd heard before the legend of the cursed offspring that supposedly roamed the woods and was half horse, half man. And yet here was something—

"Where did you see it?" I demanded.

Gruder's smile was mocking. "In the woods—at night."

"You mean you were spot-lighting?"

No answer.

"What happened?"

"I was movin' through an' ol' orchard that'd grown over. All t'onct I knew I wasn't alone. I froze, listenin'. Then I saw it. 'Twas lookin' over a bush, glarin' at me!"

The man's slack lips began to work. "What did you do then?" I asked quickly.

"I threw the light on it. It's eyes were awful—blood red!"

"And it had horns?"

"Sharp 'uns!"

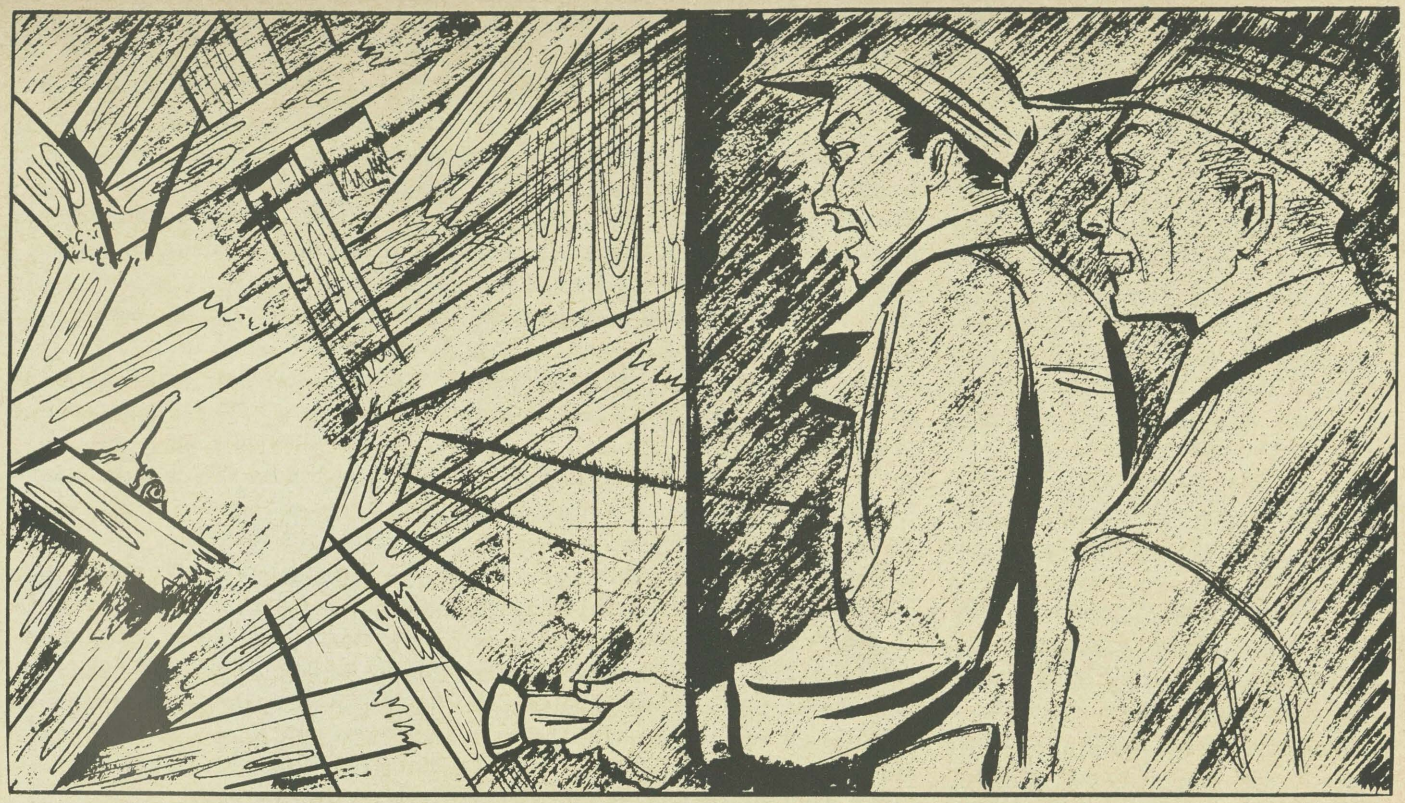
"Hell, man!" I snorted. "You saw a deer."

Gruder's reply was a passionate whisper: *"No, the horns went straight up, without a single point on 'em, an' the hair on the chest was snow-white!"*

"You're lying!" I snapped. "There's nothing in these woods that could answer to such a description!" I looked to Tim for confirmation. The old guide flushed and avoided my glance.

"All right," I said quietly. "It's time someone exploded this myth. Tomorrow night I shall be waiting in that same orchard—and I hope I am flattered with an appearance by this apparition!"

It required another half hour of tedious questioning before I was able to collect the last doubtful fact concerning the Ghost. As I walked quickly across the dark clearing to the bunkhouse I couldn't help feeling pleasantly superior to the two men behind me, and yet, instinctively I felt too that Gruder had been



telling the truth—that I had no business in getting mixed up in this thing.

Driving along the concrete highway, I almost overshot the narrow, black-top road that twisted away through the rolling pine country. For miles I passed nothing other than stunted green trees. Then, slowly at first, there appeared signs of civilization; an occasional grown-over corn field, or a forgotten sawmill site.

The heatless, winter sun was silhouetting a stark ridge of burnt oak trees to the west when at last I entered the small, weather-warped village that met Gruder's description.

I stopped before a box-like general store with dusty windows and a rusting gas pump. Inside the stale air smelled of wood smoke and cooking spice.

"Yes?"

I hesitated. I could feel the hostile glances of several hangers-on. "A loaf of bread," I said, pointing, "and a can of those beans."

"An' I thought I knew 'em all, too!" an unfriendly voice drawled behind me.

I sensed the situation — they thought I was a new game warden sent in to investigate the inevitable deer poaching.

I studied the white haired proprietor. "Is there an abandoned farmhouse around here with some gravel pits behind it?"

No answer.

"He must mean the Hinton place," a flat voice offered. "It wuz in those pits that Mary Hinton gave birth to—" the voice checked itself.

I paid my bill and turned to go.

The old proprietor followed me to the door. "Thuh Hinton place lays up thuh west road about three miles. When yuh get thar, better take my advice—an' keep right on a-goin'!"

"Thanks," I said dryly and departed. I had expected as much.

The abandoned Hinton farmhouse lay in rotting decay at the wooded edge of a large, grown-over apple orchard that paralleled the road. At this distance the barn and several small buildings appeared to be intact, but the roof of the large house, I saw, sagged drunkenly in the middle, like a saddle. Beyond it I could make out the brush covered lips of the pits.

I drove the car off the road and hid it inside a clump of young pine. Then I made a quick supper of the staples I'd bought.

Dusk was settling quietly into the orchard by the time I finished and set out along the grown-over ruts left by gravel trucks when the local roads were first being built. The night gave promise of being overcast, and I knew that the moon would not rise until late. It would be a long walk—and even longer walk back through the darkness—and I would have preferred to have driven the car in. Yet I know that if anything *were* frequenting this desolate place it would be best to have the car hidden. . .

Scattered patches of frozen snow still lay upon the uneven ground. Instinctively I avoided them, preferring to let the grass muffle the sound of my hurrying footsteps.

Shadows were already filling the pits brim-full as I skirted the brooding farm buildings and came upon a well worn deer trail. I followed the trail almost to the edge of the pits. Then I sat down with my back to a gnarled apple tree and prepared to wait.

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Preceding Page)

Night fell quickly. It seemed to bring with it an ethereal hush that softened the harsh contours of the land.

I slipped a couple of buckshot loads into my 12-bore and laid my flashlight within easy reach.

Gradually the silence grew more dense, seemed actually to be pressing in on me from all sides. Once I heard the thin, plaintive wail of a hound in the distant village. That was all.

I sat thus for a long time, waiting, listening. My legs and spine grew chill and cramped. I had about decided to give in and stand up to stretch, when suddenly I experienced the prickly sensation that *something was passing close before me in the dark*!

I strained my ears until they thundered with pulse beat. Nothing! Nothing but a light, musky breeze —although I could have sworn that there hadn't been a breath of air stirring a moment before.

With sweating palms I fumbled for the flashlight. The white beam stabbed through the blackness before me, behind me, on all sides. I jabbed it challengingly against the wooded ridges of the pits. Nothing —absolutely nothing!

Visibly shaken, but disgusted with myself for having developed a case of "nerves," I prepared to go. The night was far too dark anyway, I told myself, I should have waited for an early moon.

And then, purely by chance, I saw something that really shook me!

Clearly outlined in a small patch of snow beneath one of the apple trees, the dancing light revealed tracks. The pronged hoof marks were old, frosted over, yet an ageless fear tightened my shoulders at sight of them.

For there were only *two* of the huge prints, instead of four—*whatever it was that had left those tracks had been walking upright*!

The long winter had almost drawn to a close when I received the phone call from an excited Tim.

"*The Thing had been seen again*!"

"No!" I gasped. "Where?"

"Comin' outta the pits behind the old Hinton place!"

This time when I returned I was much better equipped to deal with the Ghost. I had brought along a .30-.30 rifle, night glasses and a big thermos of steaming coffee. Even more comforting, I had brought with me a companion. Jim and I had hunted bear together and I knew that I could depend on him if the going got rough.

"Weird sort of a place, isn't it?" Jim mused as a quarter moon revealed a shifting ground mist that clung to trees and buildings.

I didn't reply. I was thinking of the burly native who'd stepped back off the road to watch us suspiciously as we drove past the town. This night might well be fraught with several dangers.

We waited. Overhead the frosty slice of moon swam through a cloudy sky, sending formless shadows stealing back and forth through the twisted trees of the orchard, and we eyed each movement critically.

I must have dozed, for I was conscious of living again in a specter-world of childish folklore; vampires and wood nymphs; centaur-like apparitions that advanced with twitching tails and were half man, half animal. It was the steely pressure of Jim's big hand that awakened me.

Jim had the night glasses to his eyes. "Look—there!" he said tonelessly.

I saw it. In the shadows beside the brooding barn. A white form, watching us intently through the shifting mist!

I brought up the .30-.30 with one motion. Then I hesitated, What if it *were* human?

Too late, the thing melted from view behind the building.

"C'mon!" I snapped. "We'll encircle the barn. There's a corral back there. If we can corner it—"

Jim carried a .38 Police Special. Before we parted I noticed that he held the heavy revolver in one hand.

I was breathing quickly as I reached the corner of the barn. The musk of rotting wood hung heavily in my nostrils. I held the flashlight ready. A few more steps into the darkness and I would know. Cautiously I slipped through the first bars of the corral.

"*Crash!*"

The sound and the motion reached me as one! Yet even as the impact shattered painfully against my right side I managed to depress the light button of the flash.

For one horrible instant a solid, hairy body pressed close against mine; I glimpsed a white blur of horned, raging face. And then I was spinning helplessly to earth, still conscious of a strong, rancid odor of perspiration that the thing left behind it as it rushed away into the darkness.

Bang!

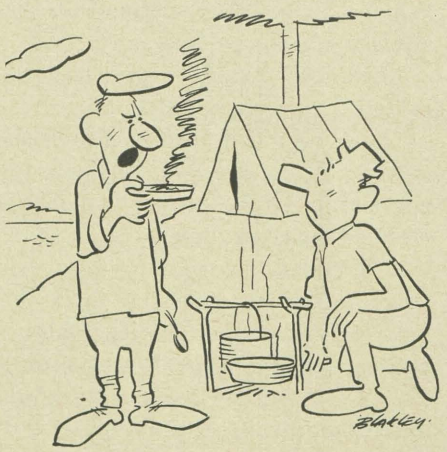
Jim's revolver roared as I scrambled frantically to my feet, searching for the fallen flashlight.

"It's the Ghost!" Jim yelled. "Inside the barn—" his words were lost under the protesting clatter of a heavy door being slammed shut.

Within the dark building bedlam had broken loose. Again and again there came the splintering crash of a powerful body striking against unseen obstructions. I ran forward.

Jim was a dark blur leaning against the shivering door, sobbing for breath.

"Open it," I yelled, "and stand



"Nobody can cook like my wife but this comes pretty close to it."

clear!" Man, beast or devil, I still had faith in the .30-.30.

Jim did so. I saw him leap sideways as I brought up the gun.

Silence. Silence broken only by a throaty, labored breathing coming from somewhere inside the black void before me.

"Come out!" I heard myself ordering crazily. "Come out or I'll—"

I sensed the murderous, vengeful rush even before the hoofed feet rang against the wooden floor. A piercing, inhuman scream rent the night as flame spurted from the .30-.30 once, twice—three times!

"For God's sake, get the light!" I sobbed. "I've killed it!" And I restrained myself from rushing forward to render assistance.

There was now only a pitiful gasping for breath, and I could hear a body trying to drag itself away. I attempted to strike a match. I couldn't.

The sound changed to a rattling choking that grew louder—demanding. "Bring the light—quick!" I pleaded again.

And then Jim returned. We stood shoulder to shoulder, grateful for each other's presence, as the light played over the blood-soaked apparition that lay dying at our feet.

There before us was the white face, the hairy, whiskered jaws, the liquid, glazing eyes. And, most fearful of all, the thick pointless horns jutting straight up out of the skull!

Jim squatted down and stared in disbelief at the flaring, crimsoning nostrils, the white, even teeth. "A deer," he whispered, "but what a deer!"

I looked at the snow-white, quivering body, and nodded. It was true. Suddenly I felt joyful, unutterably weary—I had expected something else—

"I think I know what happened," I said at last. "Look at those horns, at the long chin whiskers. This animal is the product of a mating between a white-tail deer and a domestic goat." I'd heard of a similar instance once before.

"Yes," Jim agreed. "And that explains those tracks you saw in that small patch of snow—it was probably standing on its hind legs, reaching up to eat the new branches on the apple tree."

We were carrying out the heavy carcass when they came—silent, suspicious figures that seemed to rise up from out of the ground as they fell in solemn step in the blackness behind us. No word was spoken, only a weird mutter of hushed sound that rose and fell above the trailing funeral procession; strange people, pallbearers shrouding the white body of Mary Hinton's grotesque offspring in graveclothes of a superstition that was too old to die.

Needless to say, Jim and I were glad to send the humming car back through the pine country, toward the concrete highway and the distant city where would be shining the bright lights of reality. ●

BASS FISHING, A TO Z

(Continued from Page 32)

that they only use 4-lb. or 6-lb. mono. Put this down: they are either fishing clear-water lakes without pads or snags or they are losing most of the good fish. In my experience, it is impossible to turn even a four-pound bass from pads or a snag with anything less than 8-lb. mono, and after many disappointments in snaggy water (what other kind of water is bass water?) I now use nothing but super-limp 8-lb. on my spinning gear and as terminal leaders in fly casting.

If a bass is bound and determined to get snagged despite everything you can do, release the pressure on him just before he goes into the snag nest and he will sometimes come out again. Sounds unbelievable, but I've seen it happen when all seemed lost.

Last summer I took a seven-pounder from a pot-hole after he had proved he was going into the bullrushes despite all the pressure I could apply without breaking the leader. I gave him line and watched him jump *inside* that clump of bullrushes. He threaded his way out again exactly the same way he had gone in, then barged into a bunch of grass on the far side. I gave him line again and he came out again, so disgusted that he laid over on his side and let me land him.

It doesn't happen often, but it *can.*

Your veteran, artful, skillful bass fisherman views the efforts of the amateur with disdain, forgetting that in bass fishing every man's an expert.

Just the other evening I scouted a likely spillway on St. Lucie Canal, approached it silently, cast it carefully without receiving a swirl or a follow. The moon was wrong. The breeze wasn't right. You could have thrown a frog out there and he could have swum across it 72 times without evoking the slightest interest from a bass. When bass aren't hitting they aren't hitting, and that's all there is to it, as every bass fisherman knows. Carelessly I walked down to the spillway edge, cocked my flyrod across my arm and lit a cigarette.

Along came one of those fish-tailed outboards with a 30-h.p. engine screaming at its tail. A big, beefy, bull-necked guy — he didn't even look like a bass fisherman, I can tell them a mile away—jammed the boat ashore, emptied a beer can and threw it over against the concrete wall of the spillway.

"How they bitin', fellow?" he asked.

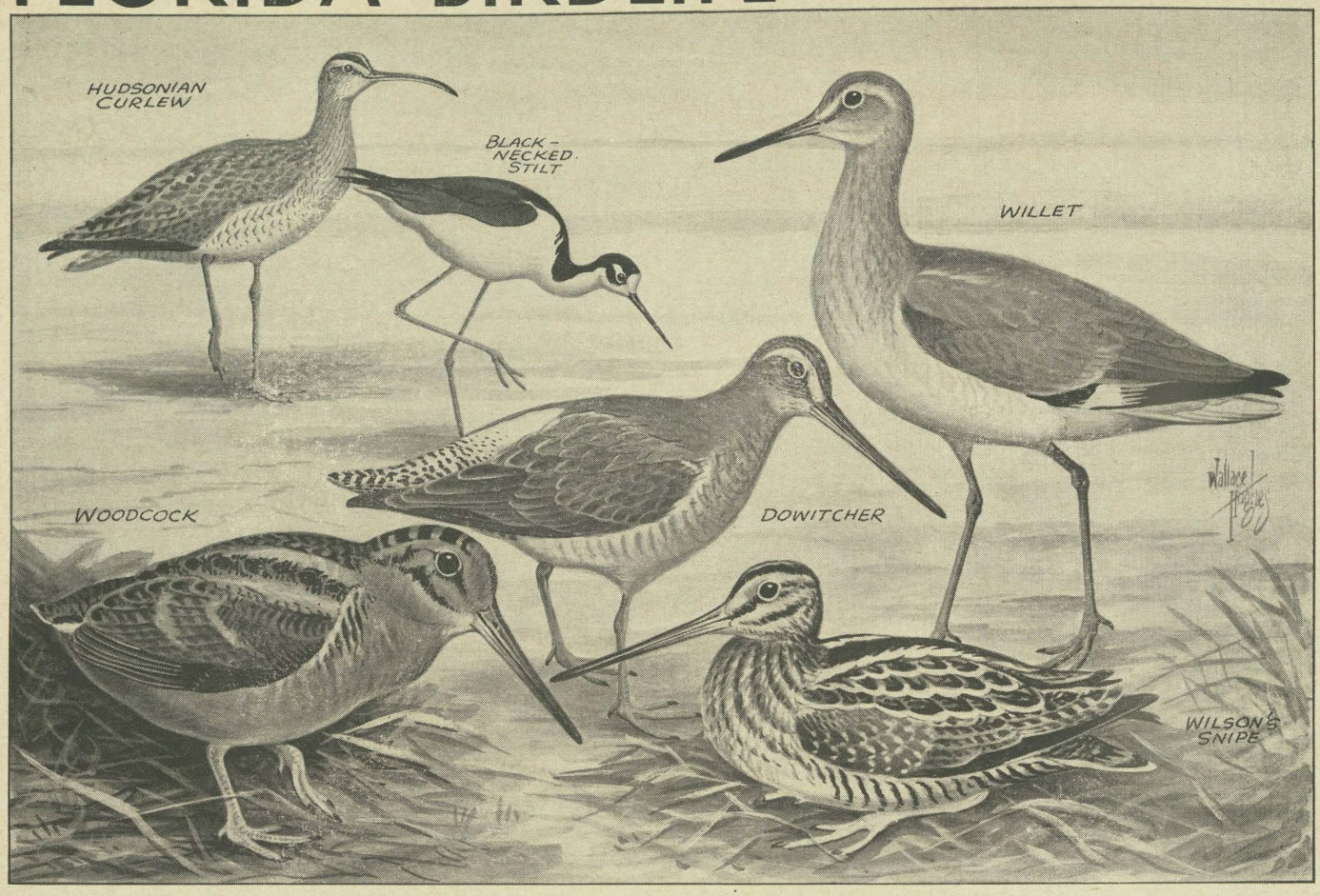
I gave him my best patronizing smile. "They aren't on the feed this evening," I said.

Old Dumb & Stupid cast an atrocity of a plug right down below where I was standing. A hideous thing. No bass in its right mind—

"Whh-a-mm!" Spray from the strike showered my face. Old Dumbo deftly landed a six pounder. He reached back in the boat and put it on a stringer which held half a dozen more, the smallest of which looked to be about four pounds.

I turned around and slowly walked away. That's bass fishing from A to Z. ●

FLORIDA BIRDLIFE



Woodcock, *Philohela minor.*

In general appearance the woodcock is a blocky, rich brown bird with broad, rounded wings. The body length is about 11 inches and the weight about 6 ounces.

Despite the fact that it is a moderately common winter resident in parts of the state, the woodcock is seldom seen unless specifically sought out. Most of its daylight hours are spent on the ground in boggy thickets. From Orlando southward to the vicinity of the Caloosahatchee River the species is much less common than it is in the more northerly parts of Florida.

The woodcock's staple food is the earthworm, secured by probing with the long bill. Larvae of flies and beetles, and occasionally seeds, berries, or tender leaves are other dietary items.

Wilson's Snipe, *Capella gallinago.*

A popular game bird in Florida as in many other parts of the country, the snipe is an abundant winter resident here. It is numerous in favorable habitat well down into the southern portion of the peninsula.

The snipe's long bill and strongly striped head are main identification points. Wet, boggy meadows, pastures, and burned grasslands are favored haunts. So well does the color pattern of the snipe match the surroundings that the bird is difficult to spot when it "freezes" at the hint of danger.

When flushed, the snipe makes off in erratic flight, darting this way and that, offering a difficult target.

Earthworms, a variety of insects, small crustaceans, snails, and occasionally the seeds of marsh plants are primary foods.

Dowitcher, *Limnodromus griseus.*

This chunky-bodied, long-billed shore bird is frequently confused with the Wilson's snipe which it resembles in form but not in plumage pattern. During the winter season, it is essentially gray in coloration with a whitish, finely-barred tail and a pale gray rump patch.

In Florida it is perhaps most often encountered about the coastal mud flats and sandy beaches. It is also not infrequently seen inland about the margins of lakes and ponds. Although individuals or small flocks may remain in the state throughout the year, there is no record of nesting this far south.

Marine worms, aquatic larvae of various insects, small mollusks, crustaceans, and some plant material comprise the main items eaten by the species.

Willet, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus.*

The willet is a rather heavy, grayish colored bird with blueish gray legs and heavy bill. In flight, the large white patches in the wings are characteristic.

The willet nests along the coastal salt marshes and beaches of both the Gulf and the Atlantic on down into the Keys.

Its size, from 14 to 16 inches in

body length and with a wingspread of from 24 to 29 inches, its loud call, and the contrasting black and white wing pattern shown in flight makes the willet a conspicuous part of the bird life of the shore areas. Though it is unusual for a shore bird, the willet sometimes perches on tree limbs, wires, and stakes.

Hudsonian Curlew, *Numenius phaeopus.*

The unusual downcurved bill is the most outstanding characteristic of this species. The head is striped and the body coloration basically grayish brown.

The Hudsonian curlew is a fairly common sight, chiefly along the coasts, during spring and fall migrations. Their musical, rolling call, size (body length averages about 17 inches and wingspread about 32 inches) and the preferred open sand bars and flats where large flocks often feed make them a well known and conspicuous portion of local bird life.

The species nests in the northern part of the Northern Hemisphere. The wintering area is from British Guiana southward to the mouth of the Amazon and from Lower California to S. Chile. A few individuals linger here and there along the main migration routes. Food items include both animal and vegetable material, depending upon season and locale.

Black-necked Stilt, *Himantopus mexicanus.*

The contrasting black and white plumage pattern, long, slender, reddish or pinkish legs, and the long, very slender bill make the stilt one of the easiest of birds to identify. It is fairly common as a nester in the central part of the state. The species winters in more southerly climes, at least as far south as Brazil and Peru.

Black-necked stilts are gregarious. They often gather in large, noisy flocks to feed on the mud flats and sand bars. Their diet is comprised almost entirely of animal material, mainly insects, with only an occasional item of plant material taken. ●

FLORIDA CLUB NEWS

(Continued from Page 5)

years of college work are so similar in the various courses that choice of the information and education work could be taken up in the third year of school.

It was also pointed out that the first two years of college bring about the heaviest percentage of student failures.

At a meeting of the conservation fund awards committee, a brief outline of 1958 projects divided the work into three programs:

1. Scholarships for worthy students wishing to take jobs in Information & Education.

2. Furnishing of awards to career personnel of the state conservation agencies who voluntarily add to their education facilities or who have provided literature which will be of educational benefit in Florida, other southeastern states or national groups.

3. Scholarships for summer workshops for teachers in elementary and junior high schools. This program is already in existence under the auspices of the Florida State Garden Clubs organization.

The first year's program will require about seven or eight thousand dollars, a small part of which is already available.

Trustees of the organization are Stanley Taylor, president of the Florida Bank and Trust Company, Daytona Beach; Sidney Chase of Chase & Co., Sanford, and Dr. H. R. Wilber of DeLand, Federation President. ●

THE WINGED MENACE

(Continued from Page 35)

Cecil Tucker of Fort Christmas, Florida, reported that every wound of livestock was infested that year. Henry Partin of Kissimmee said that his sons shot three heavily infested deer. Roscoe Bass, a stockman, said that planned calving in the winter months had not prevented screwworm losses and that he might have to give up raising calves; riders cost $12 to $15 a day and are hard to find. Jay B. Starkey of St. Petersburg, chairman of the Florida Livestock Board, reported 90 infestations in 125 calves. L. B. Kibler of Lakeland said he was losing $1,500 worth of bulls a year from screwworm attacks. P. E. Williams, of Davenport reported that he was riding herd every day and finding every injury infested. W. L. Larkin of Dade City lost a $1,600 bull from screwworm infestation and said 80 per cent of his calves were attacked. Lee Ellsworth, manager of the Orlando Livestock Company, found many infested deer, and half the calves on 200,000 acres were attacked. A. W. Birchwood of Holopaw found 12 cattle grub holes infested in one week. C. C. Skipper, Federal employee working on screwworms, said that raccoons bred more of the insects than do woods hogs and reported that 25 infested deer had been found by one Wildlife Officer in Collier County. J. O. Pearce, Jr., president of the Florida Cattlemen's Association, estimated that the cost of labor to treat screwworm cases runs $2.30 per head per year, or nearly $3.4 million in the State of Florida.

Living with the pest had grown to be too heavy a burden. You can't live with a killer. The Florida Legislature in 1957 appropriated funds for a two-year program of eradication. The U. S. Congress voted matching funds. The Screwworm Eradication Program, a cooperative venture by the Florida Livestock Board and the U. S. Department of Agriculture, started to work in the fall of 1957.

The means of screwworm eradication started in the mind of an entomologist with imagination when he noticed that the female screwworm mates only once. Like the insect itself, which searches animal epidermis for the weak place, he was searching for the Achilles heel in the screwworm life history. He found the weak point and with it the key to eventual extermination of the screwworm.

But that is another story. ●

muzzle flashes

By EDMUND McLAURIN

MUCH OF THE PLEASURE of participating in shooting sports today stems from use of modern, improved equipment and from keeping up with the latest firearms developments.

It was not always so . . . This Gun Editor remembers quite well the fifteen year period between 1925 and 1940 when new gun models to whet the shooter's appetite and tempt his pocketbook were disappointingly few. Certain sight combinations, popular today, were practically nonexistent. Gun catalog succeeded gun catalog with pretty much the same illustrations and model descriptions.

In those days, fervent letters to Remington, Winchester, Marlin and Savage suggesting practical improvements in stock shapes and fore-ends, asking that certain gun models be factory-fitted with sling swivels or pre-drilled for optional installation of receiver and scope sights brought disappointing replies. It would prove too expensive to change production methods, or to furnish desired features as standard equipment, was the basic theme.

It's a different story now . . . Not only have some of the old-timers, like the original Marlin 39, Savage 99, Winchester 52 and the Marlin 336, been improved, largely in accordance with shooters' expressed preferences, but other gun models of yesteryear — the Remington models 12 and 24, and the Winchester models 57, 90 and 64, to name a few — have either been discontinued entirely or radically re-designed and given new model designations. Even a gun editor, whose personal and professional firearms subject interests are almost full-time, finds it difficult to keep up with all of the many changes. New gun models call for constant investigation and testing. Whereas firing and mechanical testing of new guns once occupied only a small part of this Gun Editor's time, now weekly accuracy and mechanical tests are the rule. Ammunition consumption (all calibers and gauges) has gone up from an average of 26,000 rounds per year to approximately 40,000, with the cost thereof a major item in the family budget.

Latest guns to be field tested are the Winchester Model 55 .22 caliber rifle, the new Remington Model 725 bolt-action big-game rifle and the color versions of the Remington Model 572 slide-action .22 caliber repeater.

The New Winchester .22 Single Shot

Many readers are familiar with the Winchester Model 67, bolt-action single shot .22 caliber rifle, for a long time listed in Winchester's catalogs and generally recognized as being a fine, inexpensive training rifle for youngsters.

Winchester's new single shot .22 caliber rifle, their Model 55, can be loaded and fired just about as rapidly as a slide-action or autoloader, total time taken for loading and firing of 100 shots. Its mechanism is especially simple and safe, our Gun Editor reports.

Barrels on the 67's have always been good performers. This Gun Editor once re-stocked one of the rifles, fitted it with target front and rear sights, tuned up its mechanism and proved the rifle's barrel capable of almost unbelievable accuracy, fired over 100 yards from bench rest.

Winchester's introduction of the Model 55, low-priced, single shot .22 is obviously to give young shooters a simple, safe rifle action, comparable to that of the Model 67 in such characteristics, but with a much faster loading and firing cadence.

After making sure the visible safety is set for "Fire" position, the Model 55 is cocked initially by pulling back the rifle's slide handle and releasing. Loading is then accomplished by placing a cartridge on a loading chute that aids the shooter's fingers in seating the cartridge in the chamber — an operation that can be performed very rapidly after a little practice.

Closing of the rifle's mechanism on the loaded cartridge automatically moves the mechanical safety to "Safe", or non-fire, position, and the safety must then be manually moved to "Fire", exposing a red dot indicator, before the rifle can be fired.

After the first shot, ejection and cocking of the new .22 is entirely automatic; all the shooter has to do is feed a new cartridge into the mechanism, take off the safety, shoot and repeat the process. Only when the trigger is snapped on either an empty cartridge case or an empty chamber is it necessary to first cock the rifle deliberately and begin anew.

For this reason, Winchester is calling the new, Model 55, .22 rifle an "automatic single shot".

The rifle's built-in safety factor is unusually high, because when loaded by its user the safety mechanism automatically changes to the "Safe" position, requiring manual changing to "Fire" before the shot can be fired.

Once the loading and firing operations are understood, a user of the Model 55 can fire single shots just about as quickly as when using a slide-action or autoloading .22, whether the shooter is normally right or left handed. After a little practice, FLORIDA WIDLIFE's gun editor fired the Model 55 single shot as rapidly and as accurately as a companion using a repeating rifle, total loading and firing time for 100 shots being the scoring basis for the competition.

The Model 55 Winchester single shot is far more streamlined in design than the Model 67 bolt-action.

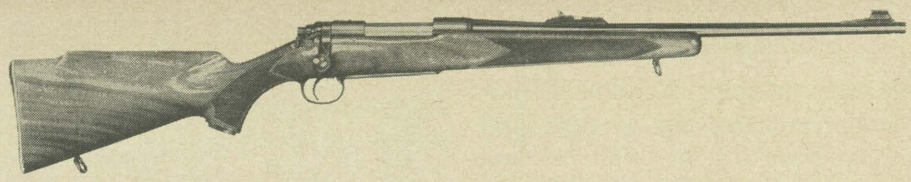
It should be an ideal training rifle for the younger shooters in the family and for summer camp range use.

The Remington Model 725, De luxe

Gun lovers who have long admired the strength and accuracy of the Remington bolt-action, center-fire models Nos. 721 and 722 will enthuse over the design and features of Remington's new big-game rifle, their Model 725. Available in a choice of three popular calibers — the new .280 Remington, the .30-06 Springfield and the .270 Winchester — the new Remington, in its de luxe edition, may easily challenge the long-standing popularity of the fine Winchester Model 70 bolt-action, one of the most popular and satisfactory bolt-action, big-game rifles ever produced.

Features that contribute to superior performance and proof of new gun designing are to be found in the new Remington.

Among several practical and eye-appealing features, the new Model 725 comes fitted with an all-purpose Monte Carlo pattern stock that offers a common sight line for optional use of either iron or telescope height sights, and shoulder and face fit



Accuracy and great strength of receiver and action have long been popular features of Remington bolt-action models Nos. 721 and 722. In the new Model 725, illustrated, these have been combined with both beauty and new developments in the firearms field. Available calibers are .280 Remington, .30-06 Springfield and .270 Winchester.

conducive to marked reduction in felt recoil from the different calibers. Good pistol grip contours make for good feel and uniform trigger control — a feature FLORIDA WILDLIFE's gun editor became aware of right away when test firing the new Remington.

A hinged magazine floor plate, that can be given fast, positive release from inside the trigger guard, contributes to easy, rapid loading of four additional cartridges to supplement one in the rifle's chamber. To unload the new Remington, the bolt remains closed, the floor plate is swung open and the remaining, unfired cartridges fall into the shooter's hand, while the cartridge already in the rifle's chamber is ejected in the normal manner.

The rifle has a large thumb safety, placed on the right rear of the receiver, that is as positive and convenient as the one on the military Enfield action.

One of the first new features to attract an examining eye is the open ramp type rear sight Remington uses on the Model 725. To adjust for windage, the shooter merely turns a screw on the right-hand side of the leaf sight until proper sighting is acquired for correct windage, and the usual adjustable ramp takes care of needed elevation changes. The entire rear sight may be removed and replaced without change in windage, or resighting.

The 725's front sight blade is pinned in, a feature that permits easy change to other desired styles, like the Redfield Sourdough blade and the Lyman bead, without disturbing normal windage adjustment on the previously used sight setting.

The Model 725 comes drilled and tapped (with holes filled with dummy screws) for five possible sight mountings.

Bolt-action rifles have always been noted for their accuracy, and the Remington Models 721 and 722 for their great strength receivers and bolts; the new Model 725 combines these highly desirable qualities. FLORIDA WILDLIFE's gun editor found the Remington 725 a very enjoyable rifle to shoot and very accurate.

For those readers who want a quick "low down" of the 725's technical features, specifications follow:

Remington Model 725

Calibers: .280 Remington, .30-06 Springfield, .270 Winchester.

Action: Bolt. Bright finished body . . . handle blued. Receiver dull matte finished.

Magazine: Fixed, with hinged floor plate. Trigger guard and floor plate of high strength aluminum. Floor plate release inside trigger guard. 4-shot capacity plus one in chamber. Wide corrugated match type trigger.

Stock and Fore-end: American walnut. . . fore-end and pistol grip finely checkered. All purpose stock with Monte Carlo comb for use with iron or telescopic sights. Black grip cap and checkered metal butt plate.

Safety: Thumb operated, side mounted . . . 3 position control. Receiver marked "F" and "S" for Fire and Safe.

Barrel: 22-inch round tapered, crowned.

Sights: Flat face gold bead front sight with hood. Step adjustable rear sight with windage adjustment screw.

Weight: 7 lbs.

Length — Overall: 42½ inches. ●

WEATHER LORE

(Continued from Page 37)

evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather for the sky is red and lowring."

Severe Winter Weather was predicted in Longfellow's "Evangeline," "All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement. Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their honey 'Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes."

This homey, catchy jingle had its merits, "Onion skin very thin; Mild winter coming in; Onion skin thick and tough, Coming winter cold and rough."

Preparations really got under way for severe cold weather when the pioneers noted: The fur on dogs was thick and long; squirrels' tails were unusually bushy; the dark band on certain caterpillars was white and narrow; corn husks were thick and coarse; dense growth of moss appeared on the north side of trees, and nuts and berries were especially abundant. Another sure sign was "When the mesquite trees are heavy with beans, look for a COLD winter."

So, we see, practically all of the ancient theories were based on the assumption that Nature gives everything that would be injured by extreme cold and severe weather a sufficient amount of its own kind of protection.

Snow was expected when: The cat sat with its back toward the fire; cows lowed in late evening; horses whinnied to one another, and dry leaves rattled in the trees.

A *thaw* was eagerly awaited after seeing: Cats washing their faces; hogs rubbing themselves against the barn, and the old sheep refusing to eat dry feed.

Signs of *Spring Weather* were many and varied, but each sign was especially welcome to the pioneers. Regardless, however, what animal or plant was the favorite sign, spring arrived pretty much on time each season. At times an unusually severe winter retarded the advance of some plants for a few days, habitues of the fields and forests begin to act differently. Some of the "sure signs" that spring had arrived included: Crows flying in pairs; ants coming out and building new hills; toad frogs and horned lizards appearing after winter-long sleep, and robins and blue birds were heard in song.

Some old-time nature enthusiasts would not concede winter was over until the appearance of the skunk cabbage, trout lily, or Jack-in-the-Pulpit. While it took the flowering dogwood to convince others that spring had come.

No matter what the calendar said, spring had arrived in the Southwest when mesquite tree leaves were out. This is a belief of long standing that no mesquite tree will send its leaves out into a cold world, but waits until there is no chance of a freeze. Also, when the mesquite started budding that was the signal to set out tomato plants, just as it was corn planting time when the leaves of the elm were the size of a squirrel's ear, and time to plant cotton when the cottonwood tree bloomed.

According to many writers of prose and poetry, "Bluebird Weather" and March and April are almost synonymous, inasmuch as the bluebird is the generally accepted harbinger of spring.

We have saved for the last one of our oldest nature-myths—the fable about the groundhog, or woodchuck, and his uncanny weather prophecies.

According to folklore, groundhogs all over the world come out of their snug winter burrows on the second day of February and look the situation over. If he sees his shadow, back he scurries into the hole, thus presaging six weeks additional of winter weather. If he fails to see his shadow, he remains outside and that means an early spring.

Naturalists contend that the groundhog seldom, if ever, leaves his warm winter quarters until about March 1st. The more cynical in scientific circles even contend the groundhog is far too stupid to recognize his shadow if he were to see it! Nevertheless, many people believing in legendary lore gaze apprehensively skyward on the second day of February, hopeful that one of the most famous of all wildlife forecasters will not see his shadow. Hit or miss, the groundhog continues to be the most popular of all long range weather prophets, and his popularity never declines.

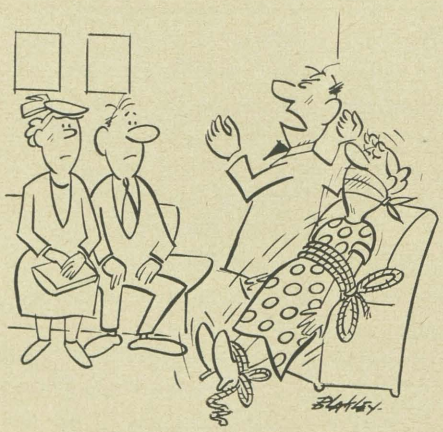
We close with Charles Dudley Warner's famous quotation — "Everybody *talks* about the weather, but nobody does anything about it!" ●

SLOW AND DELIBERATE

(Continued from Page 23)

it rest a full minute or more before moving it that first all-important time. If there is a bass lurking beneath it, it normally doesn't require that long a wait to arouse its curiosity. The twenty count is usually sufficient.

Next time you are out fishing, force yourself to slow down. Fish deliberately and thoroughly. You may cover less water, but in the long run you'll wind up with more fish. And, after all, isn't that the point of this wonderful game, anyway? ●



"— As I was saying, this fish was at least — —"

GET THE POINT

(Continued from Page 21)

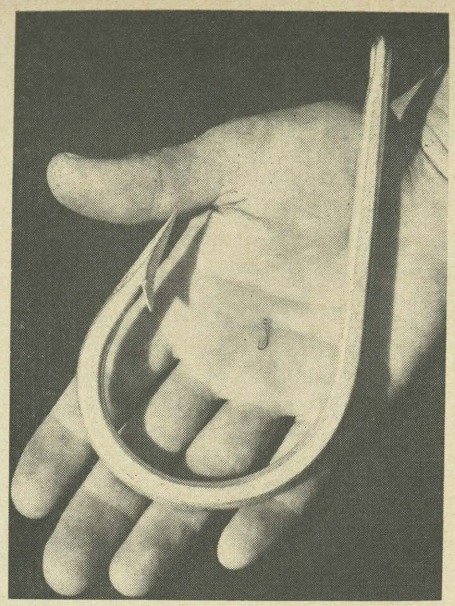
In other sections of this country, as well as in foreign lands, hook patterns are apt to vary radically. It is estimated that several thousand different hook patterns are in use throughout the world.

Quality hooks for both sport and commercial fishing are today made by a long list of American and foreign firms, with brand names like Mustad, Auburn, Bill DeWitt, Eagle Claw, Kahle, P&K, VM and Sealey being popular representations of both.

Among rival manufacturers, fishhook manufacturing methods are quite secretive. Auburn, for example, markets notably sharp hooks, but will not divulge even a general description of the process by which they are manufactured. Also, the Pflueger people, usually genial and ready to give helpful editorial assistance on fishing subjects, are somewhat close-mouthed on hook-making processes. They merely state, "In hook-making, both machine work and proper tempering are important; among hook-makers the secret of proper tempering is carefully guarded and handed down from father to son for many generations.

"Our Enterprise Mfg. Company (company name for Pflueger tackle) machines are designed so that once set up for a particular hook pattern and size, a large roll of wire is fed into a machine at one end and a finished hook comes out the other end, without anyone touching it in the process. Hook wire, at this stage, is soft and must be properly tempered and annealed. Afterwards, the hooks are either gold plated, tinned, nickel plated, bronzed or japanned, then inspected closely prior to packaging.

"Two or three years ago we stocked about 750 different hook patterns and sizes, but we have reduced this somewhat. Our present facilities are geared to turn out about 400 million hooks a year."



It is estimated that there are several thousand different fishhook patterns and sizes in use throughout the world. You can get them for minnows or marlin!

Most fishing plug manufacturers purchase ready-to-use hooks of established quality from one or more sources. The Creek Chub Bait Company, which manufactures some 23 million fishing plugs annually—many of which end up in tackle boxes of Florida fishermen—has used the same brand of treble hooks for forty years. "We buy the best grades of tinned and bronzed finishes, from the smallest trebles to the heavily tinned 5/0 salt water trebles," they wrote in reply to an editorial query.

Other name brand lure manufacturers, like L&S, Bomber, Barracuda, Floreo and Porter replied much in the same vein. All find it more practical to purchase ready-mades from manufacturers who specialize in hooks than to make their own.

The majority of average size casting plugs are fitted with either 1/0 or No. 1 size treble style hooks.

Ed Howard, a national authority on fishing tackle and a writer who teamed with this author in preparing the major tackle sections of THE FISHERMAN'S HANDBOOK, points out that two hooks can be of identical shape and still one of them be much better than the other.

Forging or hammering flat both hook shank and bend, for example, usually adds quality and strength to a hook and gives it a preferred rating over a similarly shaped hook finished in round wire form, Howard explains.

Rated between the forged and round wire is the hook made from oval wire, a design almost as strong as the forged type and with the advantage that the barb may be cut into the hook's wire material without undue thinning and weakening at the point of the cut.

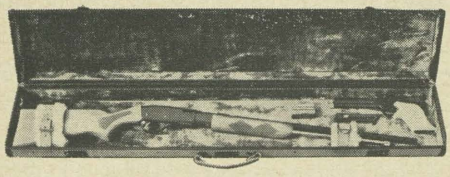
Controversy has long raged as to whether a stationary hook is superior to a loose-swinging hook, but experts agree that a lure with a rigid hook generally hooks better than one that swings loose on leader or line. But most of the experts hasten to explain that once a hook becomes a rigid component of any lure, its leverage is increased, a factor that can work against an angler's chances of landing leaping, hard-fighting fish like tarpon, sailfish or marlin.

A hook can fail by not penetrating sufficiently when a fish is struck, by breaking off or straightening out and by having its eye open up enough to come loose from line or leader. Any of these usually mean a lost fish; therefore, the best quality hooks you can find are always worth their price in dependability and fishing pleasure.....

To acquire the art of being a good listener—or fisherman—be sure to get the point! ●

"Oh, they're not that small!"

FLORIDA WILDLIFE FIELD TESTS AND TELLS



No matter in which direction the sportsman may travel in Florida, he can find suitable places for short period practice shooting with rifle or shotgun. Besides the numerous rifle, Skeet and trap-shooting club ranges where guest privileges to range facilities may be enjoyed, there are countless remote fields and sandpits where practice firing may be safely done.

Usually, however, when your itinerary takes you past such spots, your rifle or shotgun is in its case at home!

Perfect for continuous car-carry of a practice rifle or shotgun is the lightweight, but tough and rigid, luggage-style gun case made by Outers Laboratories, Inc., Onalaska, Wisconsin, in three overall lengths—45½ inches and 50 inches, to accept full length rifles (including scope-mounted models) and all shotguns with barrels 30 inches and under; and a shorter, 34-inch overall, size that accepts take-down rifle and shotgun models only.

Using one of the Wisconsin-manufactured cases, you can take your finest firearm anywhere, fully protected against all transport damage risks. Outers rigid type gun cases are especially designed for roughest travel conditions, over land, water or by air. Your gun is safe from all ordinary transportation hazards yet ready for immediate use.

The Outers case is really a beautiful, quality-made piece of luggage. The body is of tough temper aluminum alloy, practically indestructible. This basic material is covered with a most attractive leather-like fabric that is fused to the box's metal body by a special, patented process. The finished exterior is waterproof, highly resistant to scuffing, acids and oils, yet is easily wiped clean with soap and water. The case has metal ends and trim of anodized and attractively etched aluminum.

The manufacturer claims the case will never warp and FWFT&T considers it practically impossible to dent, even when transported in a jolting truck or Jeep.

The interior is lined with contrastingly handsome blue low pile plush, in which the gun is cradled and held in locked, shockproof position by sheepskin padded straps that instantly lock or release.

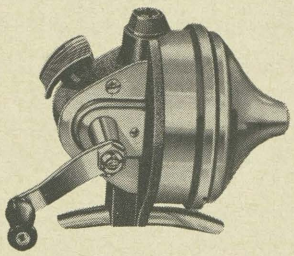
A piano-type hinge runs full length of the case and all closure parts are tongue and groove fitted.

Air vents in each end of the case can be opened to provide free circulation of air during periods of storage.

Retail price is $24.95, regardless of overall length chosen.

To get the maximum use from one of these fine gun carrying trunks, FWFT&T recommends screwing a plywood shelf horizontally across the back of a car's trunk compartment. On this shelf place the Outers gun case in horizontal position, case also pushed back snugly against the far end of the car's compartment. Then take a pencil and draw a line the full length of the shelf, using the face side of the positioned gun case as a guide. Remove the case temporarily and nail a thin strip of wood full length along the line just drawn. When you next position the gun case on the shelf, it will automatically drop into the formed recess, secure against slipping or noisy transportation, yet easily removed by merely lifting it over the low thin strip.

FWFT&T has never seen a luggage style gun case equal to the Outers Laboratories' product. It's quality merchandise throughout, guaranteed by its makers for workmanship and will surely give nothing but pleasure and satisfaction! A test model has been given more than a full year of both ordinary use and deliberate abuse by FWFT&T, yet is still practically new in appearance. When you examine a sample, you will readily understand why FWFT&T recommends the Outers trunk-style gun case without reservation.



Among fishermen the world over, the name of Pflueger, trade mark of the Enterprise Mfg. Co., Akron, Ohio, means much. The manufacturer of the Pflueger line has been making quality tackle for a long, long time. Some of the Pflueger surf reels that the editor of FWFT&T used as a boy are still giving good service after more than thirty years. The plating on some of those early model Pflueger reels was really top quality.

But FWFT&T, for various technical reasons, never waxed more than luke-warm in enthusiasm for Pflueger's original Pelican model open-face spinning reel, although, from the first, the catalog listing was backed by the manufacturer's generations-old guarantee.

However, Pflueger's new model 88, closed-faced style spinning reel is an entirely different matter. In its incorporated features, it is obvious that the Pflueger engineers devoted joint and prolonged thought and care to the development of a reel that would please the most critical.

Although FWFT&T regards the Pflueger 88 as being strongly suggestive of the Johnson Centurey in appearance, it incorporates its own claims for distinction. The Pflueger engineers claim it is the smoothest enclosed spinning reel ever built. After trying it, you may well agree.

Line control is achieved by pressing a plunger at the end of a cast, without the necessity of first turning the reel's crank. This cuts down on missed strikes that occur the moment the lure hits the water.

Another unique feature affecting line control is the gently curved contour of the reel's extended cone, which eliminates abrupt turns in the line between reel spool and cone exit hole. This more direct line feed results in less line friction, smoother casting and more distance.

Cone and side plates are anodized with bright shining red finish; other parts are black enamel and polished chromium.

The reel's line pick-up is made of carboloy, one of the hardest metals known and one often used as a cutting agent on other hard metals.

The drag mechanism uses a brake shoe of curved nylon with wide contact area for smooth action and long life and is easily adjusted at the top. The pin carrier is die-cast aluminum for greatest strength and flame-hardened for long wear where the line comes in contact near pick-up pin.

Silent anti-reverse automatically prevents fouling the line by accidentally cranking the wrong way, and stops at any point without any irritating click.

Gears are brass and stainless steel—precision machined, not moulded, for close, quiet mesh.

Line spool is of light, strong aluminum. Back of spool and hub are machined from solid aluminum. Line spool capacity is 100 yards of 6 lb. test monofilament, 150 yards of 4 lb. test or 80 yards of 8 lb. test. Reel comes equipped with one spool of 6 lb. test line. Extra spools are available and it is simple to interchange them.

FWFT&T likes the new Pflueger model 88 spinning reel; believes you will like it, too.

Price is $19.95. Your local tackle dealer probably has the new Pflueger fish-getter in stock by now.

JIG TIME FOR SPECKS

(Continued from Page 11)

Another one he didn't mention is that it takes that much longer for a bait to reach the bottom if you throw it from away out there. There's that much more line to sink.

It's hard to figure a substitute for a light spinning rod and fine monofilament where speck jigging is concerned. Baitcasting tackle is too heavy, woven line sinks too slowly and the jigs are too light for efficient baitcasting. Fly tackle is fine once you get a strike but you need a very long leader to get any kind of a fly down to the bottom and it is slow and frustrating business. I gave it up as a bad job.

If there is anything you could substitute for light spinning gear it would probably be a long cane pole with mono line. That too, has plenty of disadvantages. If the water is deep, you'd need a reel on your cracker rod to get your lure deep enough. Then too, once you're hung up you have a mighty awkward situation. Nope, better stick to the spinning rig.

The jigs themselves can run into an expensive item if you get impatient and start jerking away at submerged logs. The ardent speck feelers among my acquaintances make their own for the sake of economy. They use lead heads and about No. 2 hooks.

The dressing used varies. One guy I know is using something he found as insulation on some electric wiring and he doesn't know what it is but swears it crawls and swims like nothing else. It's white.

Maribou (soft, fine feather familiar to fly tyers) is okey and bucktail or squirrel tail works. However, the best colors seem to be yellow and white. Floridians are so yellow-happy they're almost sure to try that first but I lean toward white. I believe the main thing is good visibility in the murky depths. Your lure is small and it's on or near the bottom, often partly obscured by debris so light color should be desirable.

Little spoons and wobblers like the popular Super Duper will catch fish but most of them take a long time to get down to the business district. Probably the fact that they're more expensive limits their use considerably in bottom bumping.

There are a lot of fishermen who use nothing but jigs for everything. The little jigs used on the St. Johns are often called No Alibis because that's the name of one of the most popular commercially manufactured small jig-type lures. Nevertheless, they're jigs.

Long a standby of salt water, the jig is a comparatively recent choice for specks, bass and bream. About ten years ago I saw a bunch of fishermen laughing uproariously at a bass angler who dug a salt water jig out of his box on a day when he couldn't raise anything by other means.

"Well, I've tried everything else," he grinned ruefully.

Such a move wouldn't get a second look today. Up on the TVA lakes where they call them "leadheads" jigs are a cold water standard.

One Florida fishing expert I know has flatly announced that jigs are the answer for just about everything. He is of scientific bent and has done weeks of experimentation on lures of various types. Now that he has learned to use a vast number of jigs in a vast number of ways, he says there's no longer any challenge to fishing.

Well, I'd hate to go along with that. Although it fills an important spot and although it can be fished fast and slow, deep and shallow, the jig won't replace the surface lure in my box, simply because I like to see them come to the top.

Anyway, no matter how you feel about jigs, you'll have to acquire a feel for feeling before you collect a boatload of specks. ●

JR. CONSERVATIONIST

(Continued from Page 8)

Mr. Dade Thornton, of Miami, Advisor for the Allapattah Optimist Jr. Conservation Club.

Mr. E. Stoutamere, of Panama City, Advisor for the Future Foresters of America.

Mr. Gene Gallant, Advisor of the Deane Mather Jr. Wildlife Club of Ocala.

Mr. Allen Powell, Principal of the Shady Grove School and sponsor of their Jr. Conservation Club.

The state winner in this clasification was Mrs. Marie Puckett of the St. Petersburg Jr. Rod and Gun Club.

Congratulations to all of these very wonderful people. And of course to all the others who received honors in this Awards Program.

New Club

On February 5, 1958, at the Pasco High School in Dade City, a meeting was held in the auditorium to see how many were interested enough in conservation to organize a new club. Fourteen students and two teachers met at 3:10 on this date, and plans were made for the first organizational meeting.

It was decided to elect pro tem officers until the regular election could be held. Those elected for one month are: Lana Sue Morgan, President; Johnny Harold, Vice President; and Carolyn Clark, Secretary-Treasurer.

One week later, February 12, another meeting was called and the group named their club the Pasco Trailblazers.

Mr. Ralph Tompkins and Mr. R. Kitzmiller are to be the teacher-sponsors. ●

FISHING

(Continued from Page 5)

his own, or do without. I have tried all of these many times, and I like none of them.

When I go fishing, I like to fish early and late and take a nap after lunch. I don't want to shop for groceries or do any cooking. I don't want to have to drive all over the county looking for an early bird or night owl lunchroom. I certainly don't want to go hungry. I just want to stay at my fishing resort and eat early breakfast and late dinner in the resort dining room without fuss or bother.

Even suggesting to most fishing resorts operators that their dining room schedule could be improved brings howls of anguish and breast beating. Expecting to get this service is like asking for low rates during the rush season, and, in either case, you'll get nowhere.

I can't understand why. Surely serving food early and late on a limited basis wouldn't put an undue strain on establishments, many of which think nothing of keeping a cocktail bar open until 2 or 4 a.m. Most of these places manage to have someone on duty at the front office at 5 a.m. to take your money if you are checking out, but they recoil in horror at the thought of serving you coffee and eggs at the same hour.

I have quit bucking it. I've bought an electric skillet, a small electric coffee pot, a hot plate, a couple of saucepans, some plastic dishes, and stainless steel cutlery that all fit in a small, overnight bag, also a portable ice chest, a half dozen extra electric plugs and extension wires, and I'm in business. If you are awakened some early a.m. by the smell of coffee and bacon drifting out of a fishing resort bedroom, come on in, I'll have enough for two. ●

BASIC ANGLING

(Continued from Page 27)

snap cast is strongly recommended for spincasting, and best rod length is 6 or 6½ feet. My own preference is for the 6-ft. length in hollow glass.

Much trouble is caused in both spining and spincasting by the angler trying to wind in his fish using the reel as a winch. It can't be done. The proper way is to pump your fish with the rod. The reel is used to take up the slack the rod pumping produces. Using a spinning reel like a winch will only result in a badly twisted and perhaps broken line.

Most spinning reels have a 4-to-1 reduction gear. When you turn the handle around once, the pickup arm goes around four times. If you continue to crank when the line is not coming in, the clutch will slip, but the pickup arm still continues going around, putting four twists in the line every time you turn that handle. While you are doing this, a warning click will sound. This was put on your spinning or spincast reel to warn you to stop turning that handle when it sounds off. Almost all spinning reel trouble is caused by not understanding and following this proper procedure. Remember — pump the rod — don't use your reel as a winch.

Another mistake often made is in setting the drag too tight. This is usually done by testing the drag by hand, pulling a little line from the reel and tightening the drag until the breaking strength of the line is almost reached. In actual fishing, the added drag of the mono going thru the guides and rod tip would break a line so set. The only safe way to set your drag is to tie the line to something solid and back away, holding the rod high and putting a bend in it. Now adjust the drag so that even, quick jerks on the high held rod will not break the line. After adjusting your reel this way, again test the drag by hand at the reel. You'll be surprised how light it is.

Have Fun

The purpose of sports fishing is to have fun — pleasant, relaxed, peaceful fun. To get the most out of angling, resolve to park your aggressive, competitive drives when you park your car. These will only rob you of much enjoyment out on the water.

Angling isn't a game to be won. It's a sport to be enjoyed. The rewards are not prizes and assorted loot but, rather, a communion with nature. Angling offers an opportunity to escape for a moment the busy adult world of stress and strain and be, again, the carefree boy of yesterday.

I once met an angler of advanced years stretched out on the grass beside a shaded trout pool. His rod was standing unused against a tree. He was intently watching water bugs skate on their thin, stilt legs across the smooth, sun dappled surface. His face when he lifted it to my greeting was as serene as a child's. He is probably the most successful angler I have ever met. ●

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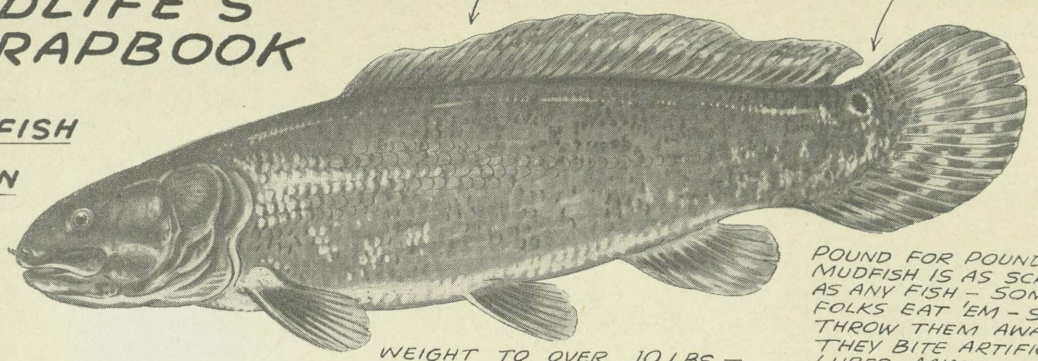
FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S SCRAPBOOK

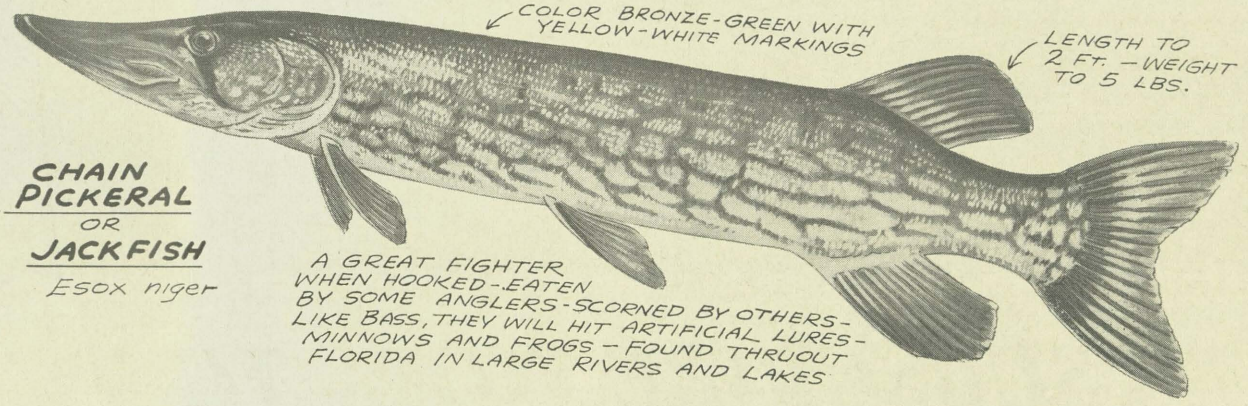


MUDFISH OR BOWFIN

Amia calva

POUND FOR POUND THE MUDFISH IS AS SCRAPPY AS ANY FISH – SOME FOLKS EAT 'EM – SOME THROW THEM AWAY – THEY BITE ARTIFICIAL LURES, MINNOWS AND WORMS

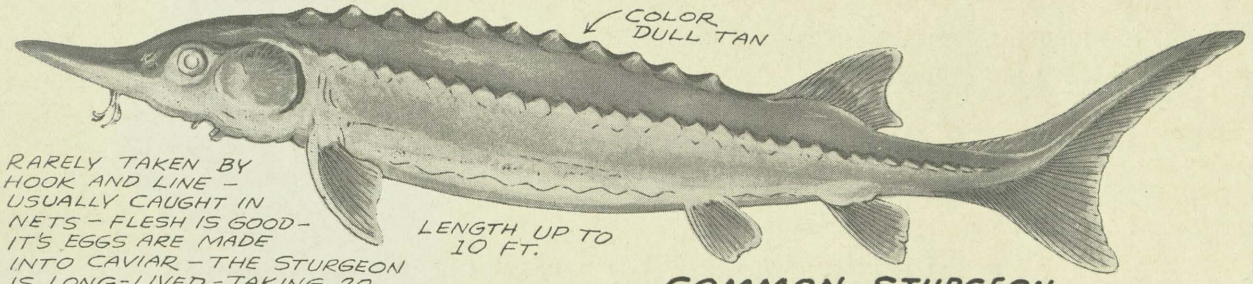
WEIGHT TO OVER 10 LBS. – FOUND IN WATERS THRUOUT THE STATE



CHAIN PICKERAL OR JACKFISH

Esox niger

A GREAT FIGHTER WHEN HOOKED – EATEN BY SOME ANGLERS – SCORNED BY OTHERS – LIKE BASS, THEY WILL HIT ARTIFICIAL LURES – MINNOWS AND FROGS – FOUND THRUOUT FLORIDA IN LARGE RIVERS AND LAKES

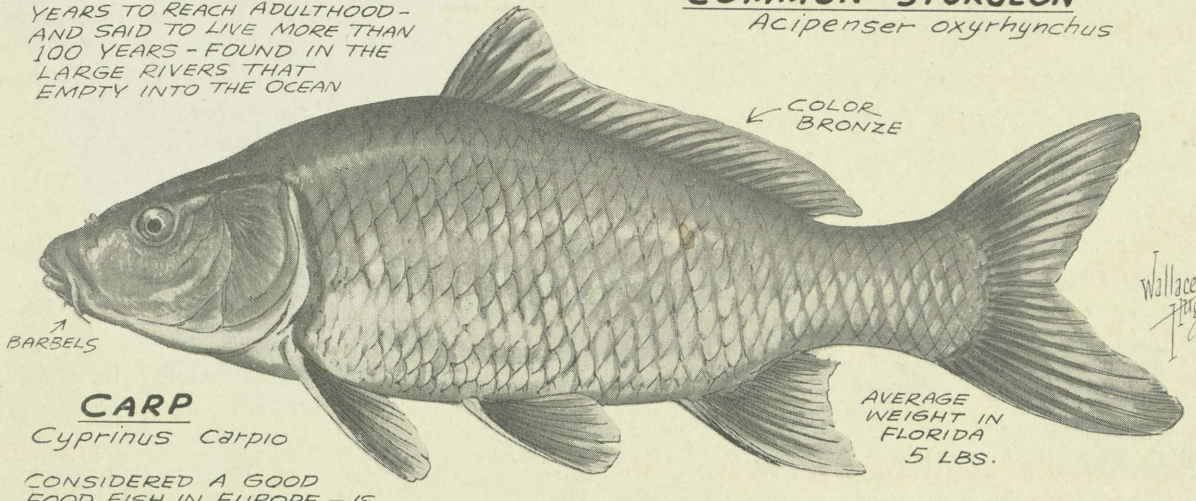


RARELY TAKEN BY HOOK AND LINE – USUALLY CAUGHT IN NETS – FLESH IS GOOD – IT'S EGGS ARE MADE INTO CAVIAR – THE STURGEON IS LONG-LIVED – TAKING 20 YEARS TO REACH ADULTHOOD – AND SAID TO LIVE MORE THAN 100 YEARS – FOUND IN THE LARGE RIVERS THAT EMPTY INTO THE OCEAN

LENGTH UP TO 10 FT.

COMMON STURGEON

Acipenser oxyrhynchus



Wallace Hughes

CARP

Cyprinus Carpio

AVERAGE WEIGHT IN FLORIDA 5 LBS.

CONSIDERED A GOOD FOOD FISH IN EUROPE – IS EATEN BY SOME FISHERMEN HERE – BUT CONSIDERED A TRASH FISH BY OTHERS – THE CARP GIVES A GOOD SCRAP WHEN TAKEN ON HOOK AND LINE – GOOD CARP BAITS ARE DOUGHBALLS, WORMS, SWEET CORN, PEAS AND CRAYFISH TAILS – FOUND IN WATERS OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE STURGEON, THESE FISHES ARE OF THE "EAT OR NOT TO EAT" CATEGORY – SOME ANGLERS LIKE 'EM – SOME DON'T – FORM YOUR OWN OPINION BY TRYING THEM SOMETIME

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